

# **AL-KHARIDA AL-BAHIA**

AN ABRIDGED ENGLISH COMMENTARY



FROM

**KEYS TO THE UNSEEN**

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# PROLOGUE

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Allah ﷺ has obligated us to know that Islam is true. Knowledge however, is distinguished from false belief by virtue of evidence. For simple claims to truth are no better than others, if those claims are not well grounded in reason. It is therefore necessary to not only claim that Islam is true, but to also prove it to be so. The discipline dedicated to fulfilling this task is called ‘ilm al-Kalam.

“Al-Kharida al-Bahia” (the Glimmering Pearl) is an introductory text for students of ‘ilm al-Kalam. It is popular for the easiness of its language, and the status of its author – Sheikh Ahmad al-Dardir (d. 1201AH), who was a late Maliki scholar hailing from Egypt.

Like many other works written for teaching purposes in the Islamic world, the Kharida is actually a poem. Students studying this poem under a teacher, would be expected to memorize the entire text, before attending lessons with their teacher in which he would commentate on each line.

What follows is a summarized English commentary on the Kharida. Each chapter will begin with a translated portion of the poem, followed by a commentary on that portion. It should also be noted that al-Dardir himself has a more complete commentary, in Arabic, on his own Kharida. A recommended read for those who wish to advance further in this discipline.

# INTRODUCTION

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

- [1] In the name of Allah, the Overly Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

يَقُولُ رَاجِيٌ رَحْمَةَ الْقَدِيرِ ... أَيُّ أَحْمَدُ الْمَشْهُورُ بِالدَّارِدِيرِ

- [2] Sates the one who hopes to receive the mercy of the Powerful – Ahmad, who is known as al-Dardir.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْوَاحِدِ ... الْعَالَمُ الْفَرِيدُ الْغَنِيُّ الْمَاجِدُ

- [3] All praise is due to Allah, the Exalted, the One, the Omniscient, the Single, the Independent, the Majestic.

وَأَفْضُلُ الصَّلَاةِ وَالتَّسْلِيمِ ... عَلَى النَّبِيِّ الْمُصْطَفَى الْكَرِيمِ

- [4] And may His peace and blessings be upon the chosen Prophet, the noble one.

وَآلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ الْأَطْهَارِ ... لَا سِيَّمَا رَفِيقُهُ فِي الْغَارِ

- [5] And upon his Household, and pious Companions. Especially he who accompanied him in the cave.

وَهَذِهِ عَقِيَّدَةُ سَيِّدِنَا ... سَمَّيْتُهَا الْخَرِيدَةَ الْبَهِيَّةَ

- [6] This is a treatise on creed, I have named it “al-Kharida al-Bahia”.

لَطِيفَةٌ صَغِيرَةٌ فِي الْحَجْمِ ... لَكِنَّهَا كَبِيرَةٌ فِي الْعِلْمِ

- [7] Even though it is short in length, It is filled with beneficial knowledge.

تَكْفِيكُ عِلْمًا إِنْ تُرِدُ أَنْ تَكْتَفِيْ ... لِإِنَّهَا بِزُبُدِ الْفَنِّ تَقْيِي

- [8] It will suffice you if you seek to be sufficed. For it covers all the fundamentals of this discipline.

وَاللَّهُ أَرْجُو فِي قَبْلِ الْعَمَلِ ... وَالنُّفْعُ مِنْهَا ثُمَّ غَفَرَ الرَّذْلِ

[9] And in Allah I hope for the acceptance of this work.  
For it to benefit others, and for Him to forgive my shortcomings because of it.

## THE BASMALLA

“In the name of Allah, the Overly Merciful, the Especially Merciful” are introductory words that one is recommended to begin anything of importance with, in hopes that Allah ﷺ would bless their work.

“Allah” is the name of God. And “God” refers to the necessary being. The one who possesses all perfections, and lacks any flaw. More on what “necessary being” means later.

“Al-Rahman” and “al-Raheem” are two more names of God. Both are extracted from “Rahmah”, meaning: mercy. There are many opinions surrounding what distinguishes each of the two from the other. The opinion that was chosen for this translation is “Overly Merciful” for al-Rahman, signifying the great extent of Allah ﷺ’s mercy towards all creation in general. And “Especially Merciful” for al-Raheem, signifying Allah ﷺ’s mercy towards His believing slaves in particular.

Allah ﷺ’s mercy refers to those blessings that He creates for his creatures. It is for this reason, that Paradise is referred to as God’s mercy in the Quran (Ali ‘Imran 107):

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ابْيَضْتُ وُجُوهُهُمْ فَقِي رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

As for those whose faces will whiten, in Allah’s mercy [Paradise] they will live forever.

Sheikh Ahmad al-Dardir begins the poem by seeking Allah ﷺ’s mercy. He chooses to call Allah ﷺ by a fourth name: al-Qadir (the Powerful). This is to highlight the dichotomy between Allah ﷺ’s great Power, and the helplessness of His slaves who need Him.

Al-Dardir further sends his blessings and salutations upon the Prophet ﷺ, the Prophet’s family, and the Companions.

The chosen Prophet, the noble one, refers to Muhammed ibn ‘Abdullah ﷺ. Who received revelation from Allah ﷺ thirteen years before the Hijra in Makkah, then a city of idol worship and moral decadence. He called his people to abandon polytheism and obey the commandments of the One God. But even when presented with proof of his prophethood,

most of them rejected him, and persecuted him and those who followed him. The Muslims fled Makkah to Madina, where the Prophet ﷺ was welcomed with new support. From there Islam quickly spread, and by the end of his ﷺ life in Madina, he had abolished all idolatry from the Arabian peninsula.

**His Household** refers to the Prophet ﷺ's immediate family ("Ahl al-Bayt"). They are the Muslims who descend from his grandfather, 'Abd al-Mutalib. The highest ranking member of the Prophet ﷺ's Household is 'Ali ibn Abi Talib ؓ.

**His pious Companions** (*Sahaba*), refers to any Muslim who met the Prophet ﷺ in person, and died upon Islam. Al-Dardir singles out **he who accompanied him in the cave**, Abu Bakr al-Siddiq ؓ, because of Abu Bakr's status as the greatest of all Companions, and the first of the Prophet ﷺ's successors to govern the Muslim nation (the first *Caliph*).

## CREED

The Kharida is an introductory **treatise on creed**, according to Ash'ari Kalam.

Creed ('aqeedah) is a set of religious beliefs that Muslims are expected to affirm. Beliefs like: "God exists", "God is One", "Muhammed ﷺ is a prophet of God". Creed is often contrasted with the science of jurisprudence (*Fiqh*), whose subject is the actions of Muslims (like the daily prayers, *Zakat*, or *Hajj*) as opposed to belief.

Kalam is the science whose practitioners seeks to prove the truth of Islamic creed. The Ash'ari school is one of the two schools of Sunni Kalam, the other being the Maturidi school.

The Ash'ari school is named after its founder: Imam Abu al-Hassan al-Ash'ari (d. 324AH). Famous for defending Islam in general, and Sunnism in particular, from its detractors. And because of his utilizing both rational and textual proofs, his methodology was adopted by the scholars of his time, as well as those who came after. His school would eventually grow to become the most popular theological school in the history of Islamic civilization.

Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (d. 333AH), founder of the Maturidi school, performed the same role for those Muslims living in Transoxiana. Using the books passed down from Imam Abu Hanifa (d. 150AH), he codified the beliefs of Sunnis, and refuted those who opposed them. Since then, most of those who followed Imam Abu Hanifa on issues of

jurisprudence, adopted Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturidi's methodology on issues related to creed.

And even though al-Ash'ari never met al-Maturidi, they both reached the same conclusions on all the fundamentals of creed. In fact, even the proofs that both Imams used to reach those conclusions are identical. Know also, that the few differences that exist between the two schools, are either semantic differences, or differences pertaining to non-fundamental issues. So pay no attention to the few extremists in each camp who disparage the other school.

# RATIONAL JUDGEMENT

أَقْسَامُ حُكْمِ الْعَقْلِ لَا مَحَالَةٌ ... هِيَ الْوُجُوبُ ثُمَّ الْإِسْتِحَالَةُ

- [10] The categories of rational judgement are most certainly; Necessity, then impossibility.

ثُمَّ الْجَوَازُ ثَالِثُ الْأَقْسَامِ ... فَإِنَّمَا مُنْحَنِتَ لَذَّةُ الْأَفْهَامِ

- [11] Then possibility, which is the third of the categories. So understand, you have been granted the gift of understanding.

وَوَاجِبٌ شَرْعًا عَلَى الْمُكَلَّفِ ... مَعْرِفَةُ اللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ فَاعْرِفِ

- [12] And it is a religious obligation for the Mukalaf, To know Allah Most High, so know Him.

أَيُّ يَعْرِفُ الْوَاجِبَ وَالْمُحَالَةَ ... مَعْ جَائِزٍ فِي حَقِّهِ تَعَالَى

- [13] To know what is necessary and impossible, Alongside what is possible for Him Most High.

وَمِثْلُ ذَا فِي حَقِّ رُسُلِ اللَّهِ ... عَلَيْهِمْ تَحِيَّةُ الْإِلَهِ

- [14] And likewise concerning the messengers of Allah, May His blessings be upon them all.

فَالْوَاجِبُ الْعُقْلِيُّ مَا لَمْ يَقْبِلِ ... الْإِنْتِقاَفُ فِي ذَاتِهِ فَابْتَهِلِ

- [15] What is rationally necessary is that which does not Accept negation in of itself, so call upon Him.

وَالْمُسْتَحِيلُ كُلُّ مَا لَمْ يَقْبِلِ ... فِي ذَاتِهِ التَّبُوتُ خِدْدَ الْأَوَّلِ

- [16] And what is rationally impossible is that which does not Accept affirmation, the negation of the first.

وَكُلُّ أَمْرٍ قَابِلٌ لِلْإِنْتِقاَفِ ... وَلِلتَّبُوتِ جَائِزٌ بِلَا خَفَا

- [17] And anything that accepts both negation And affirmation, is possible without a doubt.

## **PROPOSITIONS**

A proposition (*Qadia*) is a statement affirming one thing to another or negating it from it. Examples of propositions include:

- “God exists” which is a proposition affirming existence to God.
- “Zayd is not standing” which is a proposition negating the state of being standing from Zayd.

The standards that are used to judge the truth or falsity propositions are three:

1. Revelation (*Shari'a*). In this case, the judgement is said to be a revelational judgement.
2. Normalcy ('*Ada*). In this case, the judgement is said to be a nomic judgement.
3. Reason ('*Aql*). In this case, the judgement is said to be a rational judgement.

If a judgement cannot be reached except by appealing to revelation, then the judgement is said to be a revelational judgement (*Hukm Shar'i*). For example: affirming that “the daily prayers are obligatory”. The validity of revelation as a standard of judgement, obviously depends on the truth of Islam.

If a judgment can be reached by means other than revelation, then either this judgement requires repeated experimentation or not. If yes, then it is said to be a nomic judgement (*Hukm 'Adi*). For example: affirming that “fire burns wood”, which is known by virtue of repeatedly observing fire burn wood upon contact.

If a judgment requires neither an appeal to revelation, nor observation, then it is said to be a rational judgement (*Hukm 'Aqli*). That is the subject of this portion of the Kharida.

## **WHAT IS A RATIONAL JUDGMENT?**

A rational judgement is one where the proposition is judged according to the law of identity. To perform a rational judgement, one considers what it means for the subject of the proposition to be itself, with respect to what is being affirmed or negated from it. Judgement then depends on whether or not an absurdity entails from affirming the relation.

For example: an “even number” is an integer that is divisible by two. Being divisible by two is therefore true about an even number by virtue of what it is. Thus, the proposition “even numbers are divisible by two” is true by rational necessity. You do not need to check all even

numbers to determine their divisibility by two, nor do you need to resort to probabilistic generalizations based on the repeated testing of some even numbers. Rather, you know that “even numbers are divisible by two” by merely understanding what it means for an even number to be what it is.

## CATEGORIES OF RATIONAL JUDGMENT

The categories of rational judgement are three:

1. The necessary: **that which does not accept negation in of itself**. In other words, that which cannot be false by virtue of what it is. For example: the divisibility of even numbers by two, or the fact that the part of a body is smaller than its whole.
2. The impossible: **that which does not accept affirmation in of itself**. In other words, that which cannot be true by virtue of what it is. It is the **negation of the first category**. For example: the indivisibility of even numbers by two is a rational impossibility, because its negation (the divisibility of even numbers by two) is a rational necessity. The part of a body being larger than its whole is a rational impossibility, because its negation is a rational necessity.
3. The possible: that which **accepts both negation and affirmation**. In other words, that which accepts being either true or false by virtue of what it is. No absurdity follows from supposing either. For example: your death, or the death of someone you know, occurring tomorrow. This is neither necessary nor impossible by virtue of what it is.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

It is religiously obligatory for the Mukalaf to know Allah ﷺ. In other words, Allah ﷺ has obligated every Mukalaf to know a few things about Himself.

The Mukalaf is the one who will be held accountable in the hereafter for his choices in this life. The conditions for accountability (*Takleef*) are three:

1. Receiving the message of Islam. The one who has not received the message, is not a Mukalaf for Allah ﷺ’s saying (al-Isra 15):

وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّىٰ نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا

And never would We punish, until We sent a messenger.

2. Maturity. Those who die as children will not be held to account for their actions. They will be in Paradise according to the correct opinion. This is given what was reported from the Prophet ﷺ, who informed us that he saw the children of the disbelievers in Paradise (Bukhari 7047):

وَأَمَّا الرَّجُلُ الطَّوِيلُ الَّذِي فِي الرَّوْضَةِ فَإِنَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، وَأَمَّا الْوِلْدَانُ الَّذِينَ حَوْلَهُ فَكُلُّ مَوْلُودٍ مَاتَ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ.  
قَالَ: فَقَالَ بَعْضُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، وَأَوْلَادُ الْمُشْرِكِينَ؟ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: وَأَوْلَادُ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

...as for the tall man [that I saw] in the Garden, then he is Prophet Ibrahim, the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. And as for the children with him, then they are those children who died upon the Fitra. The narrator then reports that some of the Muslims asked: "O Messenger of Allah, and are the children of the polytheists with him as well?" So the Prophet ﷺ responded: the children of the polytheists are also with him [with Ibrahim].

3. The ability to understand the message of Islam. The one who suffers from mental disabilities preventing him from comprehending the message, is not a Mukalaf. This is because such a person would be unable to accept Islam, and Allah ﷺ has already told us (al-Baqarah 286):

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

Allah will not hold to account any soul for other than what it is able to do.

And of the things that the Mukalaf is expected to know, **is to know what is necessary, and impossible, alongside what is possible** for Allah ﷺ. For example: knowing that it is necessary for Allah ﷺ to be one, or to be powerful. Knowing that it is impossible for Allah ﷺ to have a partner, or to suffer from weakness. Knowing that it was possible for Allah ﷺ to either create the world, or leave it non-existent.

Likewise, the Mukalaf is expected to know what is necessary, what is impossible, and what is possible for the prophets and messengers. For example: knowing that it is necessary for them to be truthful, that it is impossible for them to be deceitful, and that it is possible for them to marry women.

# THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

لَمْ أَعْلَمْ بِأَنَّ هَذَا الْعَالَمَا ... أَيْ مَا سِوَى اللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَالِمَا

[18] Then know that this world –

Meaning all that exists except for Allah the Exalted, the Knowing.

مِنْ غَيْرِ شَكٍ حَادِثٌ مُفْتَقِرٌ ... لَا تَهْ قَامَ بِهِ التَّغْيِيرُ

[19] – is without a doubt emergent and contingent,

Because changes occurred within it.

حُدُوثُهُ وَجُودُهُ بَعْدَ الْعَدَمِ ... وَضِدُّهُ هُوَ الْمُسَمَّى بِالْقِدَمِ

[20] Its emergence is its existence after non-existence,

Whose negation is called beginninglessness.

فَاعْلَمْ بِأَنَّ الْوَصْفَ بِالْوُجُودِ ... مِنْ وَاجِبَاتِ الْواحِدِ الْمَعْبُودِ

[21] So know that being existent

Is a rational necessity for only the One who is worshipped

إِذْ ظَاهِرٌ بِأَنَّ كُلَّ أَثَرٍ ... يَهْدِي إِلَى مُؤْثِرٍ فَاعْتَبِرِ

[22] For clearly every effect

Is proof for the existence of an effector, so consider this well.

## NECESSITY AND CONTINGENCY

Existence for a thing is either a rational necessity, an impossibility, or a possibility.

If existence were rationally necessary for something, then this thing exists by virtue of what it is. And it is impossible for it to not-exist, for otherwise an absurdity would ensue. The only necessary existent is Allah ﷺ. This is also why He ﷺ is called “the necessary being”.

If existence were rationally impossible for something, then this thing is non-existent by virtue of what it is. And it is necessary for this thing to not-exist, for otherwise an absurdity would ensue. For example: the existence of a seven-faced cube. Since a cube is a six-faced

shape by virtue of what it is. So a seven-faced cube, would be a seven-faced six-faced shape, and that is a contradiction.

If existence were only rationally possible for something, then this thing accepts both existence and non-existence by virtue of what it is. Necessarily then, if this possible thing actually exists, this means it acquired this existence from something else. Since the thing whose existence is not by virtue of what it is, must exist by virtue of what is other than it. For this reason, possible existents are called contingents.

All contingents are also emergent, because they were brought into existence by the being who granted them existence. “Emergent” meaning: they began to exist.

From the above it should be clear that anything that actually exists, either exists necessarily, or contingently. If its existence was not granted to it by something else, then it exists necessarily. If its existence was granted to it by something else, then it exists contingently.

## THE WORLD'S EMERGENCE

Know that this world is emergent and contingent. By “world”, we mean all that exists except for Allah ﷺ. This is because the beings of the world are bodies that accept change, and acceptance of change is evidence of their being attributed with accidents, and being attributed with accidents is proof for their emergence. Thus, the occurrence of change in the world is how we come to know of its emergence.

“Body” (*Jism*) meaning: a being with dimensions (a height, width, or depth) stretched out in space. For example: stars, planets, mountains, trees, animals.

“Accident” (*'Arad*) meaning : a quality that is not necessary for the being it is attributed to. Such that if this quality ceases to exist, it is not necessary for the being attributed with it to cease to exist.

For example: the galloping of a horse, which is an accident that subsists within the horse. The galloping is an accident, because it is a quality that the horse is attributed with, even though it is not necessary for the horse to be attributed with said quality. After all, if the galloping ceases for the horse, it is not necessary for the horse to cease to exist.

Notice that each accident is emergent by virtue of what it is. This is because the existence of accidents is not necessary for the beings they are attributed to. And whatever does not exist necessarily, exists contingently.

Moreover, the occurrence of change is proof that the changing being is attributed with accidents. For change is nothing more than a transitioning from being attributed with one accident, to being attributed with another accident. When the first accident ceases to exist, the second emerges into existence.

For example: a body that changes from rest to motion, transitions from being attributed with rest, to being attributed with motion. When rest ceases to exist, motion then emerges into existence.

With all of the above in mind, we argue that bodies began to exist because they are attributed with those emergent accidents:

- Premise 1: Bodies cannot exist without accidents.
- Premise 2: Whatever cannot exist without accidents is emergent.
- Conclusion: Therefore, bodies are emergent.

The above proof is called *Burhan Huduth al-Ajsam* (the proof for the emergence of bodies). Proving its two premises is proof for the truth of the conclusion. So we will prove the two premises below.

Premise 1: it is impossible for a body to exist without accidents, because bodies cannot exist without being either at rest or in motion. And each of rest and motion is an accident. This is because it is rationally possible for a moving body to stop moving, and for a resting body to stop resting. Thus, at any given moment, a body is necessarily attributed with some accident.

Premise 2: whatever cannot exist without accidents is emergent, because the set of all accidents is emergent. And since the being in question cannot exist without accidents, it could not have existed before the set of all accidents emerged into existence. Thus, said being cannot exist beginninglessly. And what is not beginningless, is emergent.

The set of all accidents is emergent, because if it wasn't, then this would mean that there existed an infinite sequence of occurrences in the past. Each accident that emerges into existence, would have been preceded by another, ad infinitum. And since this is impossible, it is impossible for the set of all accidents to be beginningless.

It is impossible for an infinite number of accidents to have occurred in the past, because the past is the sequence of events which leads up to and then ends with the present moment. Whereas an infinite sequence would be endless by definition. And what is endless cannot come to an end.

To make this clearer with an example: it is rationally impossible to complete a journey of an infinite steps, because an infinity of steps is an endless number of steps by virtue of what it is. Each step would be followed by another, without end. On the other hand, “completing” an infinite sequence of steps implies that the sequence has an end. To say that a journey of an infinite steps was completed, is therefore tantamount to claiming that an endless sequence of steps came to an end. That is a clear contradiction. Rather, if the journey came to an end, then this would be proof for the journey’s finitude.

For the same reason, the fact that the past comes to an end with the present moment, is proof that the sequence of past events has a beginning. The impossibility of an infinite past, is called “the impossibility of an infinite regress” (*Istihalat al-Tasalsul*).

The two premises were proven, so the conclusion necessarily follows. Therefore, all bodies and accidents began to exist. And the world is comprised of bodies and accidents. Therefore, the world began to exist.

## GOD'S EXISTENCE

Given the contingency of the world, there must exist some other being who brought the world into existence. **For clearly every effect, is proof for the existence of an effector.** This creator of the world either exists necessarily, or exists contingently.

If the creator exists necessarily, then the existence of God is established. Since a necessary being is all what we mean by “God”.

If the creator exists contingently, then the existence of this creator would depend on yet a second creator to bring it into existence. And if that second creator existed contingently, then it would depend on a third. And if the third existed contingently, then it would depend on a fourth. And so on and so forth. This cannot go on infinitely, as it would entail an infinite regress. And an infinite regress is impossible. Thus, the sequence of creators– if such a sequence existed, and we will later show that it doesn’t– would ultimately depend on a necessary being to initiate the sequence. And a necessary being is all what we mean by “God”.

Either way God's existence is entailed, therefore God necessarily exists.

## THE QURANIC PROOF FOR GOD'S EXISTENCE

It should also be noted that the Quran utilizes the same argument from change to prove the contingency of the world. Allah ﷺ informs us in the Quran (al-Baqarah 164):

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَا إِنْ فَاعْلَمُ بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّياحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَتَيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

Surely in the creation of the heavens and earth, and in the alternations between night and day, the ships that sail the sea to benefit people, the rain that Allah sends down from the sky to give life to earth after it was dead, in every animal He has scattered on it, in the changes of the winds, and the swirling of the clouds between the sky and earth, are evidences for those of intellect.

And as has been demonstrated earlier, indeed the changes that are constantly occurring in this world are evidences for its contingency. And the world's contingency is proof for the existence of the Creator who brought it into existence.

Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597AH) also narrates a more basic version of the same argument from the Companions. He reports in his commentary on the same verse (Vol. 1, pg. 130):

سَمِعْتُ الْحَسَنَ يَقُولُ: كَانُوا يَقُولُونَ - يَعْنِي أَصْحَابَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الرَّقِيقِ ، الَّذِي لَوْ جَعَلَ هَذَا الْخَلْقَ خَلْقًا دَائِمًا لَا يَنْصَرِفُ ، لَقَالَ الشَّاكُورُ فِي اللَّهِ: لَوْ كَانَ لِهَذَا الْخَلْقِ رَبٌّ لَحَادَثَهُ ، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى قَدْ حَادَثَ بِمَا تَرَوْنَ مِنَ الْأَيَّاتِ

I heard al-Hassan say: the companions of the Prophet ﷺ used to say: all praise is due to Allah the Forbearing. Had He made creation static without change, then the one who doubts God's existence would say: "if this creation had a Lord, He would have changed it". And indeed, Allah Most High changes creation with what you see of His signs...

The Companions would then go on to list the incredible changes that occur in the world, to demonstrate its dependence on the Creator ﷺ.

# THE PRIVATIVE ATTRIBUTES AND CAUSALITY

وَذِي تُسَمَّى صِفَةً نَفْسِيَّةً ... ثُمَّ تَلِيهَا خَمْسَةُ سَلْبِيَّةٍ

- [23] And existence is called the attribute of being  
Followed by five privative attributes

وَهِيَ الْقِدْمُ بِالذَّاتِ فَاعْلَمُ وَالْبَقَا ... قِيَامُهُ بِنَفْسِهِ نِلْتَ التَّقْوَى

- [24] They are: Beginninglessness and Everlastingness,  
Independence, may you be granted piety.

تَخَالُفُ لِلْغَيْرِ وَحْدَانِيَّةٌ ... فِي الذَّاتِ أَوْ صِفَاتِهِ الْعَلِيَّةِ

- [25] Uniqueness and Oneness,  
He is One in His being, in His exalted attributes,

وَالْفِعْلُ فَالْتَّأثِيرُ لَيْسَ إِلَّا ... لِلواحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ جَلَّ وَعَلَا

- [26] And in His actions. Since affecting is for none except  
the One, the Overcomer, exalted is He.

وَمَنْ يُقْلِبُ بِالْطَّبَعِ أَوْ بِالْعِلْمِ ... فَذَاكَ كُفُرٌ عِنْدَ أَهْلِ الْمِلَّةِ

- [27] So proclaiming belief in Necessitating Natures or Causes,  
Is disbelief according to the people of this religion.

وَمَنْ يَقُلُّ بِالْقُوَّةِ الْمُؤْدَعَةِ ... فَذَاكَ بِدْعَيٌّ فَلَا تَلْتَقِتِ

- [28] And he who proclaims belief in the Delegation of Creative power,  
Is an innovator, so pay no attention to him.

لَوْلَمْ يَكُنْ مُتَّصِفًا بِهَا لَزَمْ ... حُدُوثُهُ وَهُوَ مُحَالٌ فَاسْتَقْرِمْ

- [29] And if He were not attributed with them, then this would entail  
His emergence, which is impossible, so remain on the straight path.

لَا نَهُ يُفْضِي إِلَى التَّسْلِسِ ... وَالدَّوْرُ وَهُوَ الْمُسْتَحِيلُ الْمُنْجَلِي

- [30] For otherwise it would entail an infinite regress,  
Or circularity, both a clear impossibility.

فَهُوَ الْجَلِيلُ وَالْجَمِيلُ وَالْوَلِيُّ ... وَالظَّاهِرُ الْقُدُّوسُ وَالرَّبُّ الْعَلِيُّ

[31] Indeed He is the Majestic, the Beautiful, the Protector,  
The Overwhelming, the Pure One, the Exalted Lord.

مُنَزَّهٌ عَنِ الْحُلُولِ وَالْجِهَةِ ... وَالاتِّصَالِ الْأَنْفَسَالِ وَالسَّفَهَ

[32] Free from subsistence or confinement to a direction,  
Or from being physically connected to or disconnected from another, in the same way He is  
free from foolishness.

## CATEGORIZATION OF THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES

An attribute of Allah ﷺ is a quality that He is characterized with. The attributes are divided into three categories:

The one **attribute of being**: which is His necessary existence. It is called an “attribute of being” because it is nothing more than Allah ﷺ Himself. Since the existence of a thing, is the thing itself extra-mentally. The existence of Allah ﷺ was covered in the previous chapter.

The **five privative attributes**: Beginninglessness, Everlastingness, Independence, Uniqueness, and Oneness. Those are the subject of this chapter.

The attributes of meaning, and they are seven: Knowledge, Life, Power, Will, Speech, Hearing, and Seeing. Those are the subject of the next chapter.

## WHAT IS A PRIVATION?

After deducing the existence of the necessary being, the sound mind then deduces a few privative qualities that this being is characterized with.

“Privative” meaning: they are conceptions of what the being in question lacks, as opposed to existent qualities that this being is attributed with.

For example: knowledge is a positive and existent quality that subsists within the knower. Ignorance however, is not an existent quality that subsists within the ignorant. Rather, it is a

negative, a lack of knowledge. And by virtue of ignorance's being a "lack of something", it is called a privation.

## THE FIVE PRIVATIVE ATTRIBUTES

The five privative qualities that every Mukalaf must affirm for Allah ﷺ are:

**Beginninglessness** (the lack of a beginning).

**Everlastingness** (the lack of an end).

**Independence** (the lack of dependence).

**Uniqueness** (the lack of resemblance to any other being).

**Oneness** (the lack of a partner).

The rational proof for all the privative attributes, is built upon Allah ﷺ's necessary existence. For if He were not attributed with any of the above, then He would have existed contingently. Entailing: that everything in existence be contingent. And if everything in existence were contingent, then this would either entail:

**An infinite regress** (*al-Tasalsul*): belief that the present contingents are caused by contingents that preceded them, and that those preceding contingents were in turn caused by a third set of contingents that preceded them, ad infinitum. We have already shown that an infinite regress is impossible.

**Circularity** (*al-Dawr*): belief that one contingent is the cause for the existence of another contingent, and that this second contingent is the cause for the existence of the first one that caused it. And this is a clear impossibility.

For an effector to bring its effect into existence, requires the effector to actually exist. If it didn't exist, it could not bring anything into existence. Since non-existents cannot influence anything.

On the other hand, for the same effector to be brought into existence, requires that this effector first not-exist. For if its existence were not preceded by its non-existence, then this would make it beginningless. And that which is beginningless cannot be "brought" into existence.

Thus, for an effecter to bring into existence the cause for its own existence, requires this effecter to both exist and not-exist simultaneously. “Exist” in order to bring into existence the contingent that caused it. “Not-exist” in order to be brought into existence by that cause. This is contradictory, and therefore impossible.

## BEGINNINGLESSNESS AND EVERLASTINGNESS

Allah ﷺ is necessarily without beginning nor end. The necessary being does not accept non-existence by virtue of who He is. So His existence cannot be preceded by non-existence (i.e. He cannot have beginning). And His existence cannot be succeeded by non-existence (i.e. He cannot have an end).

The textual proof for Allah ﷺ’s beginninglessness and everlastingness, is His saying (al-Hadid 3):

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ

He is the First and the Last.

He is the First, so He is not preceded by anything. And He is the Last, so He is not succeeded by anything.

## INDEPENDENCE

Allah ﷺ is also completely independent. He does not depend on anything else for His own existence. Not on another creator to bring Him into existence, nor on a being to subsist within. Unlike the Christians, who believe that He subsisted within Christ’s body.

His Independence is also given His necessity. The existence of the necessary being is by virtue of who He is, so He does not depend on anything else.

The textual proof for Allah ﷺ’s Independence, is His saying (Fatir 15):

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ

O mankind, verily you are in need of Allah, and Allah the Praiseworthy is in need of nothing.

## UNIQUENESS

Allah ﷺ is unlike anything in creation. This is because every aspect of any created being is created. So if Allah ﷺ shared with any created being, some of those created aspects, then Allah ﷺ would have been part created. And that is impossible for the independent and necessary being.

The textual proof for Allah ﷺ's uniqueness, is His saying (al-Shura 11):

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ  
Nothing is like Allah's resemblance

His saying (Ikhlas 4):

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَّهُ كُفُواً أَحَدٌ  
And there is nothing like unto Him.

And His saying (Maryam 65):

رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فَاعْبُدُهُ وَاصْطَبِرْ لِعِبَادَتِهِ هَلْ تَعْلَمُ لَهُ سَمِيَاً

The Lord of the heavens and earth, and all that which exists between them. So worship  
Him, and be patient in your worship. Do you know of any like Him?

Amongst the many other passages proclaiming His dissimilarity from the contingent world.

## ONENESS

Allah ﷺ is the only creator, and there is none besides Him.

If there existed a multiplicity of creators, then either: one of those creators can create something against the will of the others, or not.

If one of the creators can create something against the will of the others, then those others are not gods. For their inability to actualize their will is proof that they are weaker than the one who can, and that which is weak cannot be god.

If the creators are unable to disagree with each other, then none of them is god. In this case, each depends on the approval of the rest when creating anything, and what depends on others cannot be god.

The above rational argument, called *Burhan al-Tamanu'* (the proof by prevention), is based on the Quranic verse (al-Anbya 22):

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتْ  
If there were gods besides Allah, then the heavens and earth would have been ruined.

Had a multiplicity of creators existed, then none of them would be god. And if there was no God to create and sustain the heavens and the earth, then they would have been ruined.

## **ONENESS OF BEING, ATTRIBUTES, AND ACTIONS**

He is **One in His being, His exalted attributes, and His actions**.

“One in His Being” meaning: He is the only necessary being in existence. Everything else exists contingently, and is as such emergent.

“Oneness of Attributes” means two things: first, that Allah ﷺ is the only one attributed with the divine qualities of perfection. Second, that Allah ﷺ’s attributes of meaning are singular. In other words; He is attributed with a single attribute of Knowledge, by virtue of which He knows all things; a single attribute of Power, by virtue of which He is able to create all things that can be created; a single attribute of Will, by virtue of which He is able to specify existence for anything that existence can be specified for... etc.

As for “Oneness of Action”, to understand this you must first understand what it means for God to “act”, so we say: an act of God, is His creating something by virtue of His Power and in accordance with His Will. For example: the creating of the earth, which is an act of God.

So when we say “Oneness of Action” we mean: Allah ﷺ’s being the only one with the ability to bring things into existence. The existence of all contingents depends solely and directly on Him ﷺ.

For example: when fire comes into contact with wood, and the wood burns, it is Allah ﷺ who directly creates the burning, not the fire. It might only seem that fire is the creator of the burning to some people, because those people are accustomed to seeing wood burn

upon contact with fire. But observing a correlation between two things, does not mean that one is the creator of the other. Nor is it proof that this correlation is rationally necessary.

The same applies to all other natural phenomena. They are mere correlations. No creature actually creates anything else. The world behaves in a regular manner (i.e. wood consistently burns upon contact with fire, paper consistently floats when left on the surface of water, objects consistently fall when dropped from a height... etc.) only because Allah ﷺ willed for these correlations to exist. He ﷺ chose to consistently create one event after another, like creating burning after creating contact with fire. And if He had chosen otherwise, He could have created a world characterized with different correlations, or even a chaotic world without any correlations whatsoever.

The above includes the actions of humans, which Allah ﷺ is the creator of. This is given Allah ﷺ's attributing to Himself the creation of that which humans do (al-Saffat 95):

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

And Allah is the one who created you, and He is the creator of what you do.

So if it is said: "this belief entails the compulsion of humans, which goes against the freedom of choice that Allah affirms to them in the Quran."

We would respond: Allah ﷺ knew what humans would choose given His all encompassing Knowledge, and He has chosen to create their actions for them in accordance with some of what they willed for themselves. Therefore, His being the creator of their actions, does not entail their compulsion.

For example: suppose that Zayd decided to raise his own hand at a particular moment in time, and then his hand was raised. The one who created the motion of Zayd's hand is Allah ﷺ. This however, doesn't mean that Zayd was compelled to raise his hand. Since Allah ﷺ chose to create this motion, in accordance with Zayd's own will to do so.

Notice: the motion of Zayd's hand in the above example, is said to be Zayd's action by virtue of the motion subsisting within Zayd, not because Zayd created this motion. Zayd's acquiring of the motion that Allah ﷺ created for him, is called *Kasb*.

The rational proof for Allah ﷺ's being the only creator, is the same Burhan al-Tamanu' presented for Allah ﷺ's Oneness. Given the proof, a multiplicity of creators cannot exist. And since we have already demonstrated that a single beginningless creator exists, this means that the beginningless creator is actually the only creator.

## OPPOSING VIEWS ON CAUSALITY

The belief that Allah ﷺ is the only creator, is contrasted by three other worldviews on causality: belief in the Necessitation of Causes, belief in the Necessitation of Natures, and belief in the Delegation of Creative Power.

The first two beliefs are held by a group known as the “Philosophers”. They are the Aristoteleans who believe that effects necessarily exist if their effector does.

For example: belief that fire will necessarily burn wood, if it comes into contact with it. And that it is rationally impossible for it not to burn wood. In this case, the fire is said to be the necessitating cause for the burning of the wood.

"Necessitating Natures" qualifies the belief in Necessitating Causes further, by positing that it takes more than just the existence of a cause in order for the effect to exist. Rather, all preventers that would otherwise inhibit the ability of the cause to affect, must also not-exist. Such that if the cause existed, and all preventers did not exist, then the effect will necessarily exist.

For example: belief that fire will necessarily burn wood, if the flame connects with the wood, when the wood lacks wetness. In this case, the existence of the fire, and the non-existence of wetness, necessitates the existence of the wood's burning.

**Proclaiming belief in Necessitating Natures or Causes, is disbelief according to the people of this religion.** In other words, the one who believes in the Necessitation of Causes, or the Necessitation Natures, is a disbeliever. This is for two reasons:

First, because it entails that Allah ﷺ be unable to change the behavior of the world. For example: if fire necessarily caused burning, then it would be impossible for Allah ﷺ to make fire not-burn. And this goes against an explicit Quranic passage, which informs of us of Allah ﷺ's preventing the fire from burning Prophet Ibrahim (Quran al-Anbya 69):

قُلْنَا يَا نَارُ كُونِي بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ

We said: O fire, be cool and safe for Ibrahim.

Second, because this entails it to be rationally impossible for the world to not-exist. After all, the Philosopher believes that Allah ﷺ Himself is a necessitating cause for the existence of the world. So long as He exists, the world will exist as well. And since it is impossible for

Allah ﷺ to not-exist, then it is impossible for the world to not-exist. This is disbelief, because it would mean that Allah ﷺ is unable to choose to not-create the world. Such a theology reduces Him to a mechanistic source, which the world involuntarily flows out of. Exalted is He above what the ignorant ascribe to Him.

Belief in Necessitating Causes or Natures is false, because if it were true, then the world would have been beginningless. And we have already shown that the world is not beginningless.

Furthermore, consistently observing wood burn upon contact with fire for example, is not proof that it is rationally impossible for fire to not burn wood. It is only proof that this is what normally happens when the flame connects with wood. And this unjustifiable belief—that observing a correlation consistently, entails that this correlation be rationally necessary—is the fundamental assumption that the worldview of the Philosophers is built upon.

The last worldview on causality that is contrary to Oneness of Action, is belief in the Delegation of Creative Power. This is what an Islamic sect known as the “Mu’tazila” maintained. It is belief in Allah ﷺ’s choosing to grant some of His creatures the ability to create certain things. For example: belief that fire creates the burning of the wood, because Allah ﷺ granted it the power to burn.

**Whoever believes in the Delegation of Creative Power, is an innovator.** In other words, the one who believes in the Delegation of Creative Power is blameworthy, but his mistake is not severe enough to take him out of the fold of Islam.

Belief in the the Delegation of Creative Power is false, given Burhan al-Tamanu’. Also given the many scriptural passages which inform us of Allah ﷺ’s being the only creator. Passages like (al-Zumar 62):

الله خالقٌ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ

Allah is the creator of everything

And if there was some other being that creates things, then Allah ﷺ wouldn’t be the creator of everything.

## INCORPOREALITY AND IMMUTABILITY

What follows from what was discussed so far, is Allah ﷺ's incorporeality and immutability. That is to say: He is not a body with a shape and size, nor does He suffer from changes. He is not confined to a direction in space, nor altered by the passage of time. Rather, He transcends both.

This is given the rational proof offered earlier, Burhan Huduth al-Ajsam, which categorically demonstrated the contingency and emergence of all bodies, as well as all things that change. Whereas Allah ﷺ is necessary and beginningless by virtue of who He is.

It is also given the many Quranic verses mentioned above, asserting Allah ﷺ's Uniqueness. After all, the world is filled with bodies (humans, animals, trees, mounts, clouds..etc). So if Allah ﷺ were a body, then Allah ﷺ would not be unique.

In addition to all of the above, we will also mention the debate Prophet Ibrahim ﷺ had with his people. Allah ﷺ makes mention of this discussion in the Quran (al-An'am 74):

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ آزَرَ أَتَتَّخُذُ أَصْنَامًا آلِهَةً إِنِّي أَرَاكُ وَقَوْمَكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ

And when Ibrahim told his father Azar: “How can you take idols as objects of worship?  
Verily, I see that you and your people are in clear error”

The discussion begins with Ibrahim ﷺ confronting his father, alongside his community of idol-worshipers. The religion of Ibrahim's community taught that those who managed the affairs of the world, were actually the stars and planets in the sky. They constructed idols to represent the celestial bodies, and worshipped those statues.

فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ رَأَى كَوْكَبًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَا أُحِبُّ الْأَفْلَيْنَ

So when it was night-time Ibrahim saw a planet. He told [his people] “this is my Lord?” But when the planet set, he said “I do not worship those who move away”

Pointing to one of the planets, Ibrahim ﷺ asks the idolators if that truly is the Lord of the heavens and earth. Isn't its being stationed high up in the sky, proof of its superiority? But when the planet moved, Ibrahim concludes: it cannot be God. Since it is impossible for the true Creator to suffer from change.

فَلَمَّا رَأَى الْقَمَرَ بَارِغًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِنْ لَمْ يَهْدِنِي رَبِّي لَا كُونَنَّ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الضَّالِّينَ

So when Ibrahim saw the rising moon, he said [to his people]: “this is my Lord?” But when

it also set, he said: “if my Lord does not guide me, I will surely be amongst those gone astray!”

He ﷺ then turns to the rising moon. Isn’t motion in the upwards direction, proof of majesty and nobility? But when the moon changed from a state of rising, to a state of setting, Ibrahim concludes once again: this moon also cannot be God, despite its initial rising, because the true God does not change.

فَلَمَّا رَأَى الشَّمْسَ بَازْغَةً قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّيْ هَذَا أَكْبَرُ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَا قَوْمَ إِنِّي بِرِيْءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ

So when Ibrahim saw the rising sun, he said [to his people]: “this is my Lord? It is even larger!” But when it too set, he said: O people, I am free from the gods you associate with [the true Lord].”

He ﷺ then notices the rising sun. Not only is this celestial body rising, but it is also much larger than the moon! Isn’t its size evidence of its greatness and power? But when the sun also changed from rising to setting, Ibrahim immediately concludes: this sun also cannot be God, despite its size.

From Prophet Ibrahim’s argument, we know: it matters not whether a body is high up in the sky, or if this body is moving in the upwards direction, or if it is of an incredibly large size... what matters is that the body accepts change. And by virtue of this acceptance of change we can know that it cannot be the supreme Creator, Lord of the heavens and earth.

إِنِّي وَجَهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ

I have turned my face [in worship] to the one who created the heavens and earth, and I am not from amongst the idolators.

Stressing on Allah ﷺ’s incorporeality and immutability is important, given the modern spread of a group that calls to Tajsim. “Tajsim” meaning: belief that Allah ﷺ is a body. The believer in Tajsim is called a “Mujasim” (plural Mujasima). In support of this creed, the Mujasima offer two main arguments:

Firstly: that their past scholars believed Allah ﷺ to be a body, therefore Allah ﷺ is a body.

Secondly: obligating readers to accept the literal interpretation of the Quran and Sunnah. And then claiming that some of the passages therein indicate that Allah ﷺ is a body.

To the first argument we say: apart from the fact that most of the references you offer are fabrications attributing heinous beliefs to righteous scholars, even if those who you

reference were truly Mujasima, this would not entail the truth of Tajsim. Would you accept that Hinduism is true because Hindu scholars said so? Or that Christianity is true, because Christian scholars said so? Or that Shi'ism is true, because the scholars of the Shi'a said so? Clearly theological disputes cannot be settled by simply citing someone who agrees with you. As the maxim commonly attributed to 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib ﷺ says:

إِنَّ الْحَقَّ لَا يُعْرَفُ بِالرِّجَالِ وَلَكِنَّ الرِّجَالَ هُمُ الَّذِينَ يُعْرَفُونَ بِالْحَقِّ

Truth is not known by men, but the men [of truth] are known by knowing the truth.

Meaning: something is not true or false, because someone you admire said so. Rather, one must first independently know the truth, and then follow those who adhere to it.

And how hypocritical is the Mujasim who criticizes *Taqlid* (one's adherence to scholarly opinion, without knowing the evidence that supports those opinions himself) on jurisprudential issues by appealing to the fallibility of the scholars, when that same Mujasim insists on the *Taqlid* of those he likes when it comes to creedal matters!

Furthermore, if you accept the statements of scholars as proof in matters of theology, then why not side with the majority of scholars throughout Islamic history. Scholars like Imam Abu Hanifa, who said (*al-Fiqh al-Akbar*):

وَهُوَ شَيْءٌ لَا كَالْشَّيْءِ وَمَعْنَى الشَّيْءِ التَّابِتُ بِلَا جَسْمٍ وَلَا جَوْهَرٍ وَلَا عَرْضٍ وَلَا حَدَّ لَهُ وَلَا نَدَّ لَهُ وَلَا مَثَلَ لَهُ

And He is an existent unlike any other, meaning: He exists without being a body, or a particle, or an accident. Exists without having a physical boundary, or a rival, or a partner, or similitude to anything else.

Scholars like Imam al-Tahawi (d. 321AH), who said (*al-'Aqeedah al-Tahawia*):

وَتَعَالَى عَنِ الْحُدُودِ وَالْغَاییاتِ، وَالْأَرْکانِ وَالْأَعْضَاءِ وَالْأَدَوَاتِ، لَا تَحْوِیهِ الْجِهَاتُ السَّتُّ كَسَائِرِ الْمُبْتَدَعَاتِ

And He is clear from having physical boundaries, extremities, or sides. From having body-parts or limbs. He is not confined to any of the six directions [meaning: up, down, front, back, left, right] like all created beings.

Or like Imam al-Ghazali (d. 505AH), who wrote (*Iljam al-'Awam*):

فَإِنْ خَطَرَ بِبَالِهِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ جِسْمٌ مُرَكَّبٌ مِنْ أَعْضَاءٍ فَهُوَ عَابِدٌ صَنْمَ، فَإِنْ كُلَّ جِسْمٍ مَخْلُوقٌ، وَعِبَادَةُ الْمَخْلُوقِ كُفْرٌ. وَعِبَادَةُ الصَّنْمِ كَانَتْ كُفْرًا لِأَنَّهُ مَخْلُوقٌ، وَكَانَ مَخْلُوقًا لِأَنَّهُ جِسْمٌ. فَمَنْ عَبَدَ جِسْمًا فَهُوَ كَافِرٌ بِإِجْمَاعِ الْأَمَّةِ السَّلَفِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْخَلَفِ

So if anyone believed that Allah is a body composed of body-parts, then this person is an idol-worshipper. For every body is created. And the one who worships creation is a disbeliever. And idol-worship is disbelief because the idol is created. And we know the idol

is created because it is a body. So if anyone worshipped a body, then this person is a disbeliever, by the consensus of all Muslims; both the Salaf [i.e. those of the first three generations], and the Khalaf [i.e. those of the later generations].

As for their second argument concerning the literal interpretation of revelation, we respond: following absolute literalism would lead us into many contradictions. After all, a literal interpretation of the passages informing us of Allah ﷺ's Uniqueness, entails His incorporeality. Whereas interpreting some other passages of the Quran literally entails His corporeality. Thus, interpreting the entire book literally entails a contradiction (Allah ﷺ's being both a body, and not). Therefore, one must interpret one of the two sets of passages metaphorically, so your claim to absolute literalism falls.

So if the opponent asks: “which passages should we interpret literally, and which should we interpret metaphorically?”

The response: the Quran gives us the answer to this question (Ali ‘Imran 7):

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُّحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَآخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَمَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَبَعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلُهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ أَمَّا بِهِ كُلُّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَكُّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

It is He who sent the Book down to you; mostly comprised of clear verses, they are the foundation of the Book; and a few other verses which are ambiguous. As for those with a sickness in their hearts, they follow that which is ambiguous, seeking discord, and seeking its interpretation. And no one knows its true interpretation except for Allah. As for the people of knowledge, they say: we believe in it, all of it is from our Lord. But no one remembers except those of intellect.

Allah ﷺ informs us that the Quran is comprised of clear verses (those that afford only one interpretation), and ambiguous verses (those that afford multiple interpretations). And those with sickness in their heart, are the ones who follow the ambiguous verses to the exclusion of the rest. Entailing: the righteous believers are those who follow the clear verses, and interpret the ambiguous in light of the clear– which is why the clear verses are called the “foundations of the Book”.

With the above in mind, we then turn to the passages informing us of Allah's ﷺ Uniqueness. Passages like (al-Shura 11):

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ

Nothing is like Allah's resemblance

Or (Ikhlas 4):

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُواً أَحَدٌ

And there is nothing like unto Him.

Or (Maryam 65):

رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فَاعْبُدُهُ وَاصْطَبِرْ لِعِبَادَتِهِ هَلْ تَعْلَمُ لَهُ سَمِيَّاً

The Lord of the heavens and earth, and all that which exists between them. So worship Him, and be patient in your worship. Do you know of any like Him?

And we find that they are clear and straightforward. Passages whose Arabic only affords a single interpretation. Namely: that Allah ﷺ is unique, and unlike anything in creation.

However, when we turn to the passages which the Mujasima insist must be interpreted literally, we find that they are ambiguous passages whose Arabic affords many interpretations. Passages like (Taha 5):

الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى

The Overly Merciful on al-'Arsh Istawa

Which the Mujasima claim means: Allah ﷺ (“the Overly Merciful”) sits (Istawa) on the throne (al-'Arsh). But affords other interpretations, like: Allah ﷺ (“the Overly Merciful”) subjugates (“Istawa”) His dominion (“al-'Arsh”). In the same way “the king ascended the throne” in English, can signify the king’s taking over the kingdom, even if there wasn’t a physical chair that the king literally sat on.

From the above, we come to know that the clear passages are those which proclaim Allah ﷺ’s Uniqueness. Whereas the ambiguous ones are those which the Mujasima insist we must interpret literally. And what is ambiguous must be interpreted in light of the clear (as per Ali 'Imran 7), not the other way around. Thus, the Mujasim’s appeal to revelation in support of his beliefs is fallacious. Since the Mujasim isn’t actually appealing to revelation. He is appealing to his mis-interpretations of revelation.

So Allah is **free from subsistence, or confinement to a direction, or from being physically connected to or disconnected from another**. Since all of this entails corporeality and mutability, whereas Allah ﷺ is incorporeal and immutable. He ﷺ exists without a place, without confinement to any direction, and without alteration with the passage of time.

## TAFWID AND TA'WIL

We have shown that categorical rational proofs, and unequivocal verses of the Quran, all demonstrate Allah ﷺ's incorporeality. However, there also exist ambiguous texts whose literal interpretation suggests that Allah ﷺ is corporeal. The scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah determined two ways to deal with those ambiguous texts.

First: *Tafwid*. Meaning: consigning the true meaning of the ambiguous passage to Allah ﷺ, while negating the literal meaning which entails any imperfections for Him ﷺ. So when someone asks for the interpretation of an ambiguous text, you say: "I don't know how to interpret this text, but I know that the literal interpretation is not the correct one". This is in keeping with verse 7 of Ali 'Imran, which informs us that only Allah ﷺ knows the meanings of the ambiguous verses.

Tafwid is the safest path for lay Muslims, those unfamiliar with the Arabic language, or with the *Tafasir* (Quranic commentaries) of the scholars. After all, Muslims are not obligated to know the meanings of everything in the Quran. Especially when Allah ﷺ Himself told us that only He knows the meanings of those few ambiguous texts. As such, there is no blame in simply saying "I don't know". Tafwid is also the method favored by many early scholars (the *Salaf*), who recommended it to avoid speaking about Allah ﷺ without knowledge.

The second method in dealing with ambiguous texts: *Ta'wil*. Meaning: assigning a possible metaphorical interpretation to the ambiguous texts. This metaphorical interpretation must be congruent with the decisive rational and scriptural proofs, as well as with the rules of the Arabic language. And you affirm the metaphorical interpretation as only a possibility, because Allah ﷺ already told you that only He knows the correct interpretation for certain. For example: interpreting Taha verse 5 to possibly refer to Allah ﷺ's control over all His creation, as shown in the example above.

This is the method favored by many later scholars (the *Khalaf*), who recommended it for the purposes of defending true Islamic creed from its detractors.

# THE ATTRIBUTES OF MEANING

ثُمَّ الْمَعْانِي سَبْعَةٌ لِلرَّائِي ... أَيْ عِلْمُهُ الْمُحيطُ بِالأشْيَاءِ

[33] Then there are the seven attributes of meaning,  
His Knowledge, which encompasses all things.

حَيَاتُهُ وَقُدْرَتُهُ إِرَادَةٌ ... وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ كَائِنُ أَرَادَهُ

[34] His Life, Power, and Will,  
Everything that exists, exists because He willed it to.

وَإِنْ يَكُنْ بِضِدِّهِ قَدْ أَمَرَ ... فَالْقَهْدُ غَيْرُ الْأَمْرِ فَاطْرَحِ الْمِرَا

[35] Even if He commanded its opposite,  
For His intending for a thing to occur, differs from His commanding it, so abandon dispute.

فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ أَرْبَعًا أَقْسَاماً ... فِي الْكَائِنَاتِ فَاحْفَظِ الْمَقَامَ

[36] Now you know of four categories  
Concerning creation, so know your place.

كَلَامُهُ وَالسَّمْعُ وَالْإِبْصَارُ ... فَهُوَ إِلَهُ الْفَاعِلُ الْمُخْتَارُ

[37] And His Speech, Hearing, and Seeing,  
For He is the divine One, the volitional creator.

وَواحِدٌ تَعْلِيقُ ذِي الصِّفَاتِ ... حَتَّمًا دَوَامًا مَا عَدَ الْحَيَاةُ

[38] And it is necessary to affirm the relations of each of the attributes,  
Most certainly and always, except for Life.

فَالْعِلْمُ جَزْمًا وَالْكَلَامُ السَّامِيُّ ... تَعَلَّقًا بِسَائِرِ الْأَقْسَامِ

[39] His Knowledge and His Speech assuredly,  
Relate to all categories of rational judgment.

وَقُدْرَةُ إِرَادَةٍ تَعَلَّقًا ... بِالْمُمْكِنَاتِ كُلُّهَا أَخَا التُّقَوَّ

[40] As for His Power and Will, they relate  
To all rational possibilities, so be pious.

وَاجْزِمْ بِأَنَّ سَمْعَهُ وَالبَصَرًا ... تَعْلَقًا بِكُلِّ مَوْجُودٍ يُرَى

[41] And be certain that His Hearing and Seeing,  
Relate to any existent that can be seen.

وَكُلُّهَا قَدِيمَةٌ بِالذَّاتِ ... لَا إِنَّهَا لَيْسَتْ بِغَيْرِ الذَّاتِ

[42] And the Divine being is beginninglessly characterized with each  
Because they are not other than the being.

ثُمَّ الْكَلَامُ لَيْسَ بِالْحُرُوفِ ... وَلَيْسَ بِالتَّرتِيبِ كَالْمَلَوْفِ

[43] Furthermore, His Speech is not of letters  
And it is not sequential, as one may be accustomed to.

## THE SEVEN ATTRIBUTES

The attributes of meaning are existent qualities that Allah ﷺ is attributed with:

**Power (Qudra)**

**Will (Irada)**

**Knowledge ('Ilm)**

**Life (Haya)**

**Hearing (Sam')**

**Seeing (Basar)**

**Speech (Kalam)**

There are rational arguments to support the existence of the first four. The proof for the last three is revelational for the purposes of this commentary. Know that some scholars have offered advanced rational proofs for the last three attributes as well. You will find those in higher level books on 'ilm al-Kalam.

Notice that this list is not exhaustive. Allah ﷺ is attributed with many more attributes than the ones listed above. We know that is the case, because the Prophet ﷺ said the following in his Du'a (Muslim 486):

لَا أَحْصِي شَنَاءً عَلَيْكَ أَنْتَ كَمَا أَشْتَيْتَ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ

[O Allah] I cannot enumerate Your perfections like You do.

And Allah ﷺ's perfections are His attributes.

The seven aforementioned attributes of meaning, are only the minimum that every Mukalaf is expected to know.

## POWER

It was already proven that Allah ﷺ is the effecter of the world. So either the world's existence is necessitated by His existence, or it is not.

If Allah ﷺ's existence necessitated the world's, then the world would have been beginningless. For if an effect's existence were necessitated by the existence of its effecter, then the effect would exist so long as the effecter does. And since the effecter in this case is beginningless, then the effect would be beginningless as well.

However, we have already proven that the world is emergent. Therefore, the world's existence is not necessitated by Allah ﷺ's existence.

And since Allah ﷺ's existence does not necessitate the world's, it must be the case that He possesses the ability to bring the world into existence, despite His being beginningless. This ability to create is all what we mean by "Power". Thus, Allah ﷺ is attributed with Power.

As for the revelational proof for this Power, it is the many verses describing Allah ﷺ's act of creating, which is proof for Allah ﷺ's ability to create. Verses like (al-Zumar 62):

اللهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ

Allah is the creator of everything

As well as those verses attributing to Him power and control over the world. For example (al-Baqarah 109):

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Verily, Allah has power over all things.

## WILL

Despite Allah ﷺ's ability to create the world, it was not necessary for Him to do so. This is given that He is not a necessitating cause for the world's existence. Allah ﷺ must therefore possess the ability to select between creating the world, and leaving it non-existent. And this ability to select is all what we mean by "Will". Thus, He is attributed with Will.

The revelational proofs for His Will are numerous. Amongst them are the verses explicitly affirming choice to Him ﷺ. Like (al-An'am 125):

فَمَنْ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيْهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِإِسْلَامٍ

Whomesoever Allah wills to guide, He opens their heart to Islam

Also, those verses teaching us that Allah ﷺ could have created a different world if He had chosen to. This proves that He possesses the ability to select existence for this world over the possible alternatives. Verses like (Hud 118):

وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً

And if your Lord had willed to, He could have made all mankind one nation.

As well as those verses proclaiming that Allah ﷺ is free from obligation to do anything. This too is indicative of His ability to freely choose what to create (al-Buruj 16):

فَعَالُ مَا يُرِيدُ

He does whatever He wills

## KNOWLEDGE

Given the existence of Allah ﷺ's Will, He must be able to distinguish the specifications that are chosen from their alternatives. Since a being with the ability to make volitional choices, must know what those choices are in order to be able to select one of them. The quality by virtue of which such possibilities are made known to Allah ﷺ, is all what we mean by "Knowledge". Thus, Allah ﷺ is necessarily attributed with Knowledge.

Amongst the many revelational proofs for Knowledge, is (Saba 3):

عَالَمُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْهُ مِثْقَالُ ذَرَّةٍ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا أَصْغَرُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا أَكْبَرُ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُّبِينٍ

He is the One who knows of the unseen. Nothing is hidden from Him, not even a single atom in the heavens and earth; nor anything that is smaller or larger than that, except that it is clearly recorded.

## LIFE

Life is the condition for knowledge. The mind of the Mukalaf immediately realizes that a being who is aware of its own existence, and of the existence of other beings, is necessarily alive. As such, it becomes impossible for a being to know anything, unless this being is attributed with life. And since we have proven that Allah ﷺ is attributed with Knowledge, this necessarily means that He is also attributed with Life.

In the opening to Ayat al-Kursi, we read (al-Baqarah 255):

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ

Allah, there is no god except for Him, the Alive and Everlasting

## HEARING AND SEEING

The revelational proof for Hearing and Seeing are verses which explicitly affirm these qualities to Allah ﷺ. Like (al-Shura 11):

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

Nothing is like Allah's resemblance, and He is the Hearing and Seeing

As well as those verses criticizing idolators for worshiping objects that neither hear nor see. Entailing that one should worship He who hears and sees. Verses like (Maryam 42):

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ يَا أَبَتِ لِمَ تَعْبُدُ مَا لَا يَسْمَعُ وَلَا يُبَصِّرُ وَلَا يُغْنِي عَنْكَ شَيْئًا

When Ibrahim told his father: O father, why do you worship that which cannot hear, nor see, nor can avail you in anything?

## SPEECH

The proof for Speech is the authority of revelation itself. After all, revelation is comprised of what Allah ﷺ informs us, what He commanded us to do, and what He prohibited us from doing. And this (informing, commanding, prohibiting) is all what we mean by “Speech”. It is also given verses that explicitly affirm speaking to Allah. Like (al-Nisa 164):

وَكَلَمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا

And Allah spoke to Musa directly.

The authority of revelation is proven by proving the prophethood of Muhammed ﷺ.

## SELF AND UTTERED SPEECH

Know also that speech is categorized into Self Speech (*Kalam Nafsi*), and Uttered Speech (*Kalam Lafthi*). The Self Speech is an attribute that the speaker is characterized with, by virtue of which he signifies meanings. As for the Uttered Speech, it is those sounds or letters which express the meanings signified by the Self Speech.

The above distinction is made clearer with an example: if a human uttered the phrase “give me water”, then before uttering those words, he finds within himself a request for water which he then expresses with the phrase “give me water”. And we know that the request that he finds within himself, differs from the expression, because he can express the same request using different sounds – either by using different English words, or by using words from another language. And so what changes (i.e. the sounds which express that request) is other than that which remains unchanged (i.e. the request for water, which the speaker is attributed with, no matter how the speaker chooses to express this request).

This is also why the Prophet ﷺ distinguished between the speech within oneself, and the pronunciations expressing this Self Speech (Muslim 127):

إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَجَوَّزُ لِمَتِّي مَا حَدَثَتْ بِهِ أَنفُسَهَا، مَا لَمْ يَتَكَلَّمُوا، أَوْ يَعْمَلُوا بِهِ

Verily, Allah will overlook for my people anything they say within themselves, as long as they do not pronounce it, or act upon it.

Allah ﷺ will overlook for the Muslim what he says within himself, and will only hold him accountable for his utterances and actions. And what is overlooked (the Self Speech) is other than that which is not (the Uttered Speech).

With the above distinction in mind, know that when we speak of Allah ﷺ's attribute of Speech, we are referring to His Self Speech – an attribute by virtue of which He signifies all what He knows. This Self Speech is not of letters, and it is not sequential, as one may be accustomed to. Since the pronunciations of letters are contingent, and it is impossible for Allah ﷺ's attributes to exist contingently.

The pronunciations of letters are contingent because they are sequential. When you utter the Arabic word “Allah” for example, the “A” sound emerges before the “L” sound, and the “L” sound emerges before the “Ah” sound. And since each of the sounds that the word “Allah” is comprised of began to exist, the word “Allah” itself began to exist and is need of a creator. The same applies to any other sequence of sounds or letters.

The Arabic letters expressing the Quran written in the books, the Arabic words coming out of the mouth of the reciter, the Arabic verses memorized in the hearts of the *Hufaz*, all of this is necessarily created. And we say that those Arabic words are a transcription of Allah ﷺ's Uttered Speech: a created arrangement of words expressing the meanings Allah ﷺ eternally signified by virtue of His being attributed with Self Speech.

In summary: Allah ﷺ eternally signifies what He knows by virtue of His being attributed with Speech. He has chosen to create Arabic words to express some of the meanings He eternally signified. And those created Arabic words are what we call His Uttered Speech. This Uttered Speech is transcribed onto the books we hold in our hands today.

Know also, that the word “Quran” can either refer to the Arabic text transcribed onto the books in our hands, or to the meanings that those Arabic words express. For this reason, you might find that many scholars state that the Quran is uncreated. They intend by “Quran” in this context: that which Allah ﷺ entirely signified with His Speech (the Self Speech), not the Arabic sounds and letters (the Uttered Speech).

## DISTINGUISHING WILL FROM COMMAND

Allah ﷺ's intending for a thing to occur, differs from His commanding it. This is contrary to the claim of the Mu'tazila, who believe that His will for something to occur, is identical to His commanding for it to occur.

The example that makes the above distinction clear, is the fact that He ﷺ commanded belief in Islam from Abu Jahl, even though He did not will for him to accept Islam. And we know

that Allah did not will Islam for Abu Jahl, because Abu Jahl did not actually accept Islam. Thus, His ﷺ willing for a thing to occur, differs from His commanding it to occur.

From the above, you know of four categories concerning creation:

1. What Allah ﷺ has both commanded and willed. For example: belief in Islam from Abu Bakr ﷺ. Since Allah ﷺ both commanded and willed for Abu Bakr to accept Islam.
2. What Allah ﷺ has neither commanded nor willed. For example: disbelief from Abu Bakr ﷺ. Since Allah ﷺ neither commanded nor willed disbelief for Abu Bakr.
3. What Allah ﷺ has commanded, but not willed. For example: belief from Abu Jahl. Since Allah commanded Abu Jahl to accept Islam, even though He ﷺ did not will Islam for him.
4. What Allah ﷺ has not commanded, but has willed. For example: disbelief from Abu Jahl. Since Allah has not commanded Abu Jahl to disbelieve, even though He willed disbelief for him.

## **EXISTENCE OF THE ATTRIBUTES**

And the Divine being is beginninglessly characterized with each of the attributes of meaning. For if the attributes were emergent, then this would be a change on the part of Allah ﷺ.

For example: if Allah ﷺ's Power were emergent, then first He would have existed in a state of weakness (a state of lacking Power), before transitioning into a state of being with Power (when the Power emerged).

And we have already shown that Allah ﷺ is necessarily changeless. Thus, His attributes are all beginningless and everlasting. He possessed the beginningless and everlasting ability to create any contingent, beginningless and everlasting knowledge of all things, beginningless and everlasting signifying of everything He knows...etc.

The existence of each of the attributes of meaning, is also not other than Allah ﷺ's being, because 'otherness' implies that one can exist without the other. And since Allah ﷺ's being is necessarily beginningless and everlasting, and each of those attributes is necessarily

beginningless and everlasting, it becomes impossible for the being to exist without the attributes. For this reason, the attributes are said to be **not other than the being**.

The conception of each of the attributes is also not identical to the conception of Allah ﷺ's being. Since the meaning of "Allah exists" to the reader, is obviously not the same as the meaning of "Allah is knowing" or "Allah is powerful" or "Allah is alive"...etc.

For the above reason, the scholars say: the attributes are neither other than the being, nor identical to it. Meaning: the existence of the attributes is not other than the existence of the being. And the conception of the attributes, is not identical to the conception of the being.

## THE RELATIONS

The relations (*Ta'aluqat*) of an attribute, are the meanings entailed from the attribute's existence, other than the meaning of Allah ﷺ's being attributed with it.

For example: in addition to Allah ﷺ's being attributed with Knowledge (i.e. His being knowledgeable), the existence of Knowledge also entails Allah ﷺ's knowing about the earth, His knowing about the sun, and His knowing about the moon, amongst many other things.

**It is necessary to affirm the relations of each of the attributes, except for Life.** Since the existence of Life does not entail any meaning that is other than Allah ﷺ's being attributed with it (i.e. Allah ﷺ's being alive). Thus, Life has no relations.

## RELATIONS OF KNOWLEDGE AND SPEECH

**His Knowledge and His Speech assuredly, relate to all of the categories of rational judgment.** Meaning: Allah ﷺ's Knowledge and Speech, relate to all things belonging to all categories of rational judgment.

In other words, Allah ﷺ knows everything that is necessary, everything that is impossible, and everything that is possible. And since Allah ﷺ has signified with His eternal Speech everything that He knows, He has signified with His Speech all necessities, impossibilities, and possibilities.

## **RELATIONS OF POWER AND WILL**

As for His Power and Will, they relate to all rational possibilities. In other words, Allah ﷺ can select existence for with His Will, and bring into existence with His Power, anything that accepts both existence and non-existence.

And if it is said: “why doesn’t Allah ﷺ’s Power and Will relate to things whose existence is necessary or impossible?”

We respond: a necessary being is one that exists by virtue of what it is. Thus, a necessary being is uncreated. And if Allah ﷺ’s Power and Will related to a being, then this would mean that Allah ﷺ can create this being. So if Allah ﷺ’s Power and Will related to a necessary being, then this would make such a being both created and uncreated. Which is clearly contradictory.

As for impossibilities, if Power and Will related to them, then this would mean that those impossibilities can be brought into existence. Entailing that those impossibilities be not impossible, and that is also contradictory.

Thus, Power and Will do not relate to rational necessities or rational impossibilities.

And in the above is the answer to many of the questions that a few simpletons ask with regards to Allah ﷺ’s ability to do rational impossibilities. Questions like: “can God enter the world as a human?” or “can God create an uncreated creator?” or “can God create a stone that He cannot lift?” All of what is being asked about are rational impossibilities, whereas Allah ﷺ’s Power only pertains to rational possibilities. And Allah ﷺ’s Power exclusively pertaining to possibilities is not a weakness on His ﷺ part, since weakness is the inability to create something that can be created, and He ﷺ can create anything that can be created.

## **RELATIONS OF HEARING AND SEEING**

As for His Hearing and Seeing, then they relate to everything that exists. Existents are categorized into the necessary existence (i.e. Allah ﷺ Himself), and the possible existences (i.e. everything in the world). Thus, Allah ﷺ Sees and Hears Himself, and everything in the world.

# THAT WHICH IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ALLAH

وَيَسْتَحِيلُ خِدْرٌ مَا تَقَدَّمَ ... مِنَ الصَّفَاتِ الشَّامِخَاتِ فَاعْلَمَا

[44] And know that it is impossible for  
The above Divine attributes to be negated from Him.

لَأَنَّهُ لَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ مَوْصُوفاً ... بِهَا لَكَانَ بِالسُّوَى مَعْرُوفاً

[45] For if He were not attributed with them,  
Then He would be like creation.

وَكُلُّ مَنْ قَامَ بِهِ سِواهَا ... فَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي الْفَقْرِ قَدْ تَنَاهَى

[46] Indeed, any being that is not attributed with them  
Cannot be anymore than a contingent creature.

وَالوَاحِدُ الْمَعْبُودُ لَا يَفْتَقِرُ ... لِغَيْرِهِ جَلَّ الْغَنِيُّ الْمُقْتَدِرُ

[47] And the One who we worship is not contingent  
Upon anything. For He is the Independent, the Powerful.

## NEGATION OF NECESSITIES

All of the qualities mentioned above – the one attribute of being, the five privative attributes, and the seven attributes of meaning – are necessary for Allah ﷺ. And what is impossible, is the negation of what is necessary. Thus, **it is impossible for the above Divine attributes to be negated from Him.**

Therefore, Allah ﷺ cannot be characterized with:

1. Non-existence (the negation of His necessary existence)
2. Emergence (the negation of Beginninglessness)
3. Cessation (the negation of Everlastingness)

4. Dependence (the negation of Independence)
5. Being similar to anything else (the negation of Uniqueness)
6. Having a partner (the negation of Oneness)
7. Weakness (the negation of Power)
8. Lack of Agency (the negation of Will)
9. Ignorance (the negation of Knowledge)
10. Death (the negation of Life)
11. Deafness (the negation of Hearing)
12. Blindness (the negation of Seeing)
13. Muteness (the negation of Speaking)

## **PROOF FOR EACH OF THE IMPOSSIBILITIES**

The proof for the impossibility of each of the above, is the same proof offered for the necessity of their opposites.

For example: since it was already proven that Allah ﷺ is necessarily beginningless, then that in of itself is also proof for the impossibility of emergence for Him.

# THAT WHICH IS POSSIBLE FOR ALLAH

وَجَائزٌ فِي حَقِّهِ الْإِيجَادُ ... وَالرُّكُونُ وَالإِشْقَاءُ وَالإِسْعَادُ

[48] And it is possible for Him to create any contingent,  
Or leave it non-existent, including the creating of tribulations and pleasures

وَمَنْ يَقُلْ فِعْلُ الصَّالِحِ وَجَبَا ... عَلَى إِلَهٍ قَدْ أَسَاءَ الْأَدَبَا

[49] And he who proclaims that it is obligatory for Him to do what's better for creation  
Has disrespected the Divine.

## CREATING OR LEAVING CONTINGENTS NON-EXISTENT

Possible for Allah ﷺ is either acting or not acting. And as has been covered earlier, acting for Him, is His creating something by virtue of His Power and in accordance with His Will. Inversely, not acting is His choosing to not create something. Accordingly, **it is possible for Him to create any contingent** (any thing that accepts both existence and non-existence by virtue of what it is), **or leave it non-existent**.

## ACTIONS DO NOT ADD OR SUBTRACT FROM HIS PERFECTION

Unlike Allah ﷺ's attributes, whose negations are imperfections and are thus impossible for Him, His actions do not add to or subtract from His perfection. He does not become more or less perfect for choosing to create what He did. And He does not become more or less perfect for leaving non-existent what He could have created.

This is because Allah ﷺ is a volitional agent: a being with the ability to freely choose between possible actions. And if He were obligated to freely choose one specification over others, then this “free choice” wouldn’t actually be a free choice. That is contradictory, and is therefore impossible.

## **HE IS NOT OBLIGATED TO DO WHAT IS BETTER FOR CREATION**

Allah ﷺ is not obligated to do what is better for His creatures. Rather, He is free to create either tribulations or pleasures for whomsoever He wills. This is contrary to the claim of the Mu'tazila and Shi'a, who believe that Allah ﷺ's justice prevents Him from being the creator of tribulations.

So if the Mu'tazili or Shi'i said: "creating tribulations for helpless creatures is an injustice, and Allah ﷺ is not unjust, therefore He cannot be the creator of those tribulations."

We respond: injustice is acting upon that which you do not own, without right from the owner. And Allah ﷺ is the owner of all creation. He is therefore free to do with creation as He chooses, and it is rationally impossible for Him to be unjust, no matter the tribulations He chooses to create for them.

For the above reason, he who proclaims that it is obligatory for Him to do what's better for creation, has disrespected the Divine. As Allah ﷺ tells us (al-Anbya 23):

لَا يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعُلُ وَهُمْ يُسْأَلُونَ

He is not to be questioned about what He does, but they will be questioned about what they do.

## **NAMES THAT ARE BASED ON ACTIONS**

Some of Allah ﷺ's names signify His attributes. Names like:

- *Al-'Alim* (the Omniscient), which signifies His Knowledge.
- *Al-Qadir* (the Omnipotent), which signifies His Power.
- *Al-Basir* (the All-Seeing), which signifies His Seeing.

Other names of Allah ﷺ signify His actions, or His choosing to not-act. Names like:

- *Al-Rahman* (the Overly Merciful), which signifies His creating of blessings for His creatures.

- *Al-Muhyi* (the Giver of Life), which signifies His creating of life for His creatures.
- *Al-Ghafur* (the Forgiving), which signifies His choosing to not punish some wrongdoers.

From this, it should be noted that not every word that is related to Allah ﷺ in scripture, corresponds to a distinct attribute that Allah ﷺ is characterized with. For it is possible for scripture to refer to Allah ﷺ by a name that signifies His actions, instead of an attribute.

# SEEING ALLAH

وَاجْزِمْ أخِي بِرُؤْيَاةِ إِلَهٍ ... فِي جَنَّةِ الْخُلُقِ بِلا تَنَاهِي

[50] And have firm faith, O brother, in seeing God  
In the everlasting Paradise.

إِذْ الْوُقُوعُ جَائِزٌ بِالْعَقْلِ ... وَقَدْ أَتَى فِيهِ دَلِيلُ النَّقْلِ

[51] Since Seeing Him is rationally possible,  
And revelation has informed us of its occurrence.

## THE BELIEVERS WILL SEE THEIR LORD

Allah ﷺ will be seen by the believers in the hereafter. Allah tells us (al-Qiyamah 22-23):

وُجُوهُ يَوْمَئِنْ نَاضِرَةٌ إِلَى رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ

Some faces on that day will be beaming, while looking at their Lord.

This is contrary to the Mu'tazila and Shi'a, who argue: "everything that is seen is a body, and Allah is not a body, therefore Allah cannot be seen."

We respond: this is an argument from ignorance. Just because everything you've seen is a body, doesn't mean everything that can be seen is a body.

Remember also that your sight of bodies only occurs, because Allah ﷺ has chosen to create the sight in your eyes after light enters them. And He can choose to create this same sight in your eyes, without requiring light to enter them first. With this in mind we say: Allah ﷺ will directly create vision of Himself in the eyes of the believers, by virtue of which they will come to know more about Him. And since light is not rationally necessary for seeing, seeing Allah ﷺ will not require that He be confined to a place, at a distance, or in a direction from the seer. Seeing Allah therefore, does not necessitate His corporeality.

# PROPHETHOOD

وَصِفْ جَمِيعَ الرُّسُلِ بِالْأَمَانَةِ ... وَالصِّدْقِ وَالتَّبْلِيهِ وَالْفَطَانَةِ

[52] And attribute to all the messengers virtuousness,  
As well as truthfulness, complete delivery of the message, and acuity.

وَيَسْتَحِيلُ خِذْلُهَا عَلَيْهِمُ ... وَجَائِزُ كَالْأَكْلِ فِي حَقِّهِمْ

[53] The negations of those attributes is impossible for them,  
And possible for them are actions like eating.

إِرْسَالُهُمْ تَقْضُلُ وَرَحْمَةً ... لِلْعَالَمَيْنَ جَلَّ مُولَّي النِّعَمَةِ

[54] His sending them is from His grace and mercy  
To all worlds, exalted is He.

## PROPHETS AND MESSENGERS

A prophet (*Nabi*) is a free, male, human, who Allah ﷺ reveals commandments to. A messenger (*Rasul*) is a special kind of prophet, who Allah ﷺ also instructs to relay this revealed information to others. Thus, every messenger is a prophet, but not every prophet is a messenger.

Those people who every Mukalaf is expected to affirm prophethood for, are the twenty-five mentioned in the Quran by name: Muhammed ﷺ, ‘Isa, Musa, Ibrahim, Nuh (and these first five are the greatest of the prophets, titled *Ulil-‘azm*), Adam, Lut, Yunus, Isma’el, Ishaq, Ya’qub, Yusuf, Dawud, Sulayman, Shu’ayb, Harun, Ayub, Ilyas, Al-Yasa’, Hud, Salih, Idris, Dhu al-Kifl, Zakariya, and Yahya, the peace and blessings of Allah be upon them all.

The above list does not exhaust all the messengers that Allah ﷺ has sent to mankind. Since He told us (al-Nahl 36):

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولاً

Indeed, we sent to every nation a messenger

And the nations that existed throughout mankind's history, number greater than twenty-five.

Every Mukalaf must also believe that the prophets are the greatest of all mankind. This is given Allah ﷺ's saying concerning them (al-An'am 86):

وَكُلَّا فَضْلَنَا عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ

And each of them was favored over the rest of the worlds

Contrary to the Twelver Shi'a, who claim that their twelve imams (including 'Ali ibn Abi Talib) surpass all the prophets in rank, except for Prophet Muhammed ﷺ.

Every Mukalaf must also believe that Muhammed ﷺ is the last of the prophets. This is because of Allah ﷺ's saying (al-Ahzab 40):

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّنْ رِجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّنَ

Muhammed is not the father of any of your men, but he is the messenger of Allah, and the last of the prophets.

## **ALLAH IS NOT OBLIGATED TO SEND PROPHETS**

Like all other rational possibilities, the sending of prophets is also neither necessary nor impossible for Allah ﷺ to do. He is not obligated to hold humans accountable for their actions in this life, nor send them prophets to guide them. All of this was freely chosen by Allah ﷺ, and had He willed to, He could have chosen otherwise. **His sending them is from His grace and mercy to all worlds, exalted is He.**

## **KNOWING THE TRUE PROPHETS OF GOD**

Throughout history, many have claimed to be prophets of God. But since their various religions contradict one another, we know that not all of them are truthful. Thus, Allah ﷺ can choose to distinguish the true prophets from the false ones by way of a miracle.

A miracle is a negation of normalcy (recall that “normalcy” refers to the uniform behavior of the world, knowledge about which is acquired through observation and repeated

experimentation), which Allah ﷺ can aid His prophet with, in order to prove this prophet's truthfulness to doubters. It is equivalent to His saying: "this man tells the truth about Me."

The miracle's validity as a means to distinguish true prophets, is based on the fact that Allah ﷺ is the only creator. This necessitates that He be the creator of normalcy, since normalcy is nothing more than a collection of correlating events, and all events were created by Him. So if normalcy is negated, and this negation aids a claimant to prophethood, then this signals God's support for this claimant. As such, if we know a miracle occurred for some claimant to prophethood, then we know that this claimant to prophethood is truthful.

The *Mutakalimun* (scholars of 'ilm al-Kalam) have constructed a useful analogy to help conceptualize the above:

Imagine you were attending an important gathering at the royal palace. In the throne-room, you see the king sitting atop his throne. Surrounding the king are his guards, his viziers, as well as the noblemen of the kingdom.

Suddenly a stranger enters the throne-room, and begins offering a declaration to the crowd. Everyone else falls silent and listens to this stranger's speech. The stranger begins: "O people, I am a messenger from your king to you." The stranger points to the king, who is sitting on the throne in front of him. The stranger continues: "The words which I will speak to you are not my own, but are the words of your king who sent me. Whatever I command, I command in your king's name. Whatever I forbid, I forbid in your king's name."

You notice that the king is looking directly at this stranger, and can clearly hear this stranger make those claims. If the stranger were a liar, with a gesture of his hand the king could order his guards to seize this stranger and behead him where he stands. But the king does not do that. Instead, the king silently listens to the stranger's declaration.

The stranger continues: "Whoever obeys those commandments which I will deliver to you from your king, the king has promised to reward graciously tomorrow morning. And whoever disobeys those commandments, the king has threatened to behead tomorrow morning..." The stranger finishes his declaration by saying: "...and to prove that I really am a messenger from the king, the king has told me that he would stand up and then sit down three times consecutively after I complete this sentence."

Once the stranger completes that sentence, all eyes turn to the king. Suddenly the king– and without uttering a word to the crowd– stands up then sits down, then stands up then sits down, then stands up then sits down.

Now we ask: at this moment, and after witnessing what transpired in this gathering, can there be any doubt that this stranger is a true messenger from the king? No. Even if the king verbally declared “he is indeed my messenger” then this would not have been any more convincing. Rather, an observer to this scene would come to know that the stranger really is a messenger from the king. And out of desire for the reward, and fear from the punishment, this observer would behave in accordance with the commandments delivered by this stranger.

The king standing up and sitting down three times consecutively was a negation of the king’s normal behavior, which occurred upon the request of the stranger. By knowing that this event occurred, one attains certainty that the king has signaled his support for the stranger’s claim. Similarly, we can be certain that Allah ﷺ signified His support for a claimant to prophethood, if He aids this claimant by negating His normalcy for him.

## THE PROPHETHOOD OF MUHAMMED ﷺ

We know with certainty that Muhammed ﷺ is a Prophet of God. This knowledge is given premises supported by Mass Transmitted (*Mutawatir*) reports.

Mass Transmitted reports, are those narrations transmitted to us by so many independent witnesses, that it would be inconceivable for those relaying this information to have all gotten together to conspire to tell the same lie.

For example: a man today might not have personally visited Japan. However, this man can be certain that a country called Japan actually exists. This is because the information relayed to this man about Japan reached him from so many different sources, that it becomes inconceivable for all those people to have gotten together in a grand conspiracy to lie about the existence of Japan.

We know that Muhammed ﷺ is a real historical figure, and that he claimed to be a prophet. This is all true by Mass Transmission.

With the above in mind, we know Muhammed ﷺ is a true Prophet for several reasons, all supported by Mass Transmission. Three of which include: the Quranic challenge, extra-Quranic miracles, and his ﷺ life.

## THE QURANIC CHALLENGE

The Quran challenged Muhammed's opponents, the pagan Arabs, to disprove his prophethood by getting together and producing a chapter that rivals the eloquence of any of its chapters (al-Baqarah 23):

وَإِن كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأَتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّنْ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

And if you doubt what We have revealed to Our slave, then produce a chapter like it, and call upon your supporters other than Allah, if you are truthful.

With the above challenge in mind, we argue:

- If the pagans were unable to meet this challenge, then Muhammed ﷺ is a true prophet.
- The pagans were unable to meet this challenge.
- Therefore, Muhammed ﷺ is a true prophet.

As for the first premise, this is true because the inability of the pagans to address this challenge would be a negation of normalcy (i.e. a miracle). And as outlined above, a claimant to prophethood who is supported with a miracle is truly a prophet.

The inability of the pagans to address this challenge is a negation of normalcy, because the pagans were expert poets and rhetoricians. Professionals trained to compete in contests of poetic eloquence, which were a common occurrence in pre-Islamic Arabia. And all of this is known by Mass Transmission. To this day, Arabic linguists still use pre-Islamic poetry as a template for grammatical and linguistic rules. The Prophet ﷺ was also an unlettered man who could neither read nor write. And it is nomically impossible for one man, especially if unlettered, to present a work that the collective efforts of his community of professional poets cannot rival– let alone surpass.

As for proving that the pagans were unable to address the challenge, then it is given the fact that they were heavily invested in destroying Islam, resorted to taking extreme risks to do so, and yet they failed in their objective. The pagans imprisoned, tortured, and killed many of the early Muslims. They even engaged in wars against Prophet Muhammed ﷺ and his community. Wars where those pagans spent much time, much money, and risked their very lives in order to stop the spread of Islam. All of this is also known by Mass transmission; it is common knowledge that Muhammed ﷺ fought many wars against the pagans.

Given the above, we deduce the following: if the pagan Arabs were able to address the Quranic challenge, and given their extreme desire to destroy Islam, they would have spared

themselves the time, money, and the risk of death in battle, and they would have simply cooperated with one another in order to produce a text which rivaled the Quran literarily. But they did not, and Islam ultimately prevailed.

Thus, the pagan Arabs were unable to address the Quranic challenge, when it was nomically necessary for them to have been able to do so. And since Muhammed ﷺ was a claimant to prophethood who was aided with this negation of normalcy, then Muhammed ﷺ is a true prophet of God.

## EXTRA-QURANIC MIRACLES

Prophet Muhammed ﷺ was also supported by many other miracles. Including the multiplication of food and water, accurately prophesying future events, and the instantaneous healing of wounds and diseases.

Water multiplication, as has been reported by Anas Ibn Malik (Bukhari 169):

رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَحَانَتْ صَلَاةُ الْعَصْرِ، فَالْتَّمَسَ النَّاسُ الْوَضُوءَ فَلَمْ يَجِدُوهُ، فَأَتَيَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِوَضُوءٍ، فَوَضَعَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي ذَلِكَ الْإِناءِ يَدَهُ، وَأَمَرَ النَّاسَ أَنْ يَتَوَضَّؤُوا مِنْهُ قَالَ: فَرَأَيْتُ الْمَاءَ يَنْبَغِي مِنْ تَحْتِ أَصَابِعِهِ حَتَّى تَوَضَّؤُوا مِنْ عِنْدِ أَخْرِهِمْ

I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when it was time for ‘Asr prayers. The people searched for water to perform ablution with, but could not find it. So a pot of water was brought to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He put his hand inside of it, and commanded all the people to perform ablution with the water from this pot. He [Anas Ibn Malik] then said: I saw water springing forth from beneath his fingers, until every last person had performed ablution.

Prophesying of future events, as has been reported by Umm Salama (Muslim 2916):

تَقْتُلُ عَمَّارًا الْفِتَنَةُ الْبَاغِيَةُ  
‘Amar will be killed by the rebellious group.

This prophesy by Prophet Muhammed ﷺ foretells that a specific individual, ‘Amar Ibn Yasir, will live to see a rebellion against the Islamic state, and that ‘Amar will be on the side of the state, such that ‘Amar will then be killed by those rebels. And as the Prophet foretold, ‘Amar was indeed killed by a group of rebels in the battle of Sifin, twenty-seven years after Prophet Muhammed’s passing.

Healing miracles, like the one reported by Salamah B. Al-Akwa’ (Bukhari 4206):

هَذِهِ ضَرْبَةُ أَصَابَتِنِي يَوْمَ خَيْرٍ، فَقَالَ النَّاسُ: أُصِيبَ سَلَمًا، فَأَتَيْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَنَفَثَ فِيهِ ثَلَاثَ نَفَاثَاتٍ، فَمَا اشْتَكَيْتُهَا حَتَّى السَّاعَةِ

This injury [referring to a scar on his leg] was sustained during the battle of Khaibar. The people then said: “Salamah was injured!” So I went to the Prophet ﷺ, and he blew into my injury three times, and it never hurt me since.

In totality, there are hundreds upon hundreds of reports relating the miracles the Prophet ﷺ was aided with, from a multitude of independent witnesses. And while each of those narrations is individually only probabilistic evidence for Muhammed’s prophethood, when taken collectively, all those reports form decisive and Mass Transmitted proof for his prophethood. In the same way a multitude of singular reports relaying a person’s bravery, are collectively Mass Transmitted proof for this person’s bravery.

## MUHAMMED ﷺ'S LIFE

In addition to being supported with miracles, the prophethood of Muhammed ﷺ can also be established by considering his life.

Either Prophet Muhammed ﷺ was sincere, or he was a liar. “Sincere” meaning: he truly believed that he was receiving revelation from God. “Liar” meaning: he knew that he was not receiving revelation from God, and deliberately lied by claiming that he was.

Prophet Muhammed’s ﷺ being a deliberate liar is false, which means he must have been sincere. We know he could not have been a liar, because we know that he ﷺ suffered through persecution in Mecca without compromising his religion. He also risked his life in fighting many wars to defend the cause of Islam. And he lived humbly, spending all his wealth to serve the religion. All of this has been Mass Transmitted from him ﷺ. And this is not behavior that is characteristic of a liar. As such, we can only conclude that Muhammed ﷺ was, at the very least, personally convinced that he was a prophet.

Given Muhammed’s ﷺ sincerity: either he was a true prophet, or he was madman. “True prophet” meaning: he truly believed to have been communicating with God, and he actually was communicating with God. “Madman” meaning: he truly believed to have been communicating with God, but he actually was not communicating with God. In other words, he was a madman who was just hearing voices in his head. A man who thought himself a prophet when he actually wasn’t.

Prophet Muhammed's ﷺ being a madman is certainly false, so he must have been a true prophet. We know he ﷺ was not a madman, because we know that he was an exceedingly successful individual. To assume he was successful *because* of his madness (i.e. *because* of the voices in his head) is especially ludicrous. Muhammed ﷺ started out his life as an orphan without anything, and ended his life as ruler over all of Arabia. He was a military genius, diplomat, and the leader of a successful nation. His Companions were able to, thanks to his leadership and example, conquer the two superpowers of the world at the time— the Sassanids, and the Byzantines. All of this is, once again, known by Mass Transmission.

It is inconceivable that someone as successful as Muhammed ﷺ was a madman. It is especially inconceivable that such a man was successful *because* of his madness. So we can only conclude that he truly was a prophet of God.

## WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR PROPHETS

Given the prophethood of Muhammed ﷺ, the Mukalaf can then deduce some qualities that are necessary for him ﷺ. Those are: **virtuousness, as well as truthfulness, complete delivery of the message, and acuity.**

## VIRTUOUSNESS

“Virtuousness” (*Amana*) meaning: Allah ﷺ has protected the Prophet from sin (those acts which He ﷺ prohibited humans from doing). The Prophet neither commits sins, nor does he even intend them internally. This protection is called ‘*Isma*.

Virtuousness is necessary for the Prophet ﷺ, because Allah ﷺ has commanded us to follow him (Ali ‘Imran 31):

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَحْبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحِبِّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرُ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

Say (O Muhammed to mankind): if you love Allah, then follow me, and Allah will love you and forgive your sins. Indeed, Allah is forgiving and merciful.

Allah ﷺ commanded the Muslims to imitate their Prophet’s actions, with the exception of that which Allah ﷺ exclusively commanded the Prophet to do. So if any of the Prophet’s

actions was actually an act that Allah prohibited (i.e. a sin), then this would mean that Allah both prohibited and commanded the Muslims to perform this act. And that is contradictory.

## TRUTHFULNESS

It is rationally impossible for a prophet to lie. This is because Allah ﷺ has signaled that the prophets are truthful by supporting them with a miracle. And the one who signals that a liar is truthful, is lying. Thus, if a prophet were a liar, and Allah supported this prophet with a miracle, then this would entail that Allah ﷺ Himself be a liar – exalted is He above such things.

And lying is impossible for Allah ﷺ because it is an imperfection. After all, people lie to acquire benefits, or avoid harm. So since Allah ﷺ can neither be benefited nor harmed by anything, He ﷺ does not lie.

## COMPLETE DELIVERY OF THE MESSAGE

The Prophet ﷺ delivered what Allah ﷺ commanded him to deliver.

Allah ﷺ tells us (al-Ma'ida 3):

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

Today I have perfected your religion for you, and have completed My favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion

He ﷺ also explicitly commanded the Prophet to deliver the entire message (al-Ma'ida 67):

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ

O Messenger, deliver to the people what was sent down to you from your Lord

Given the Prophet's virtuousness and truthfulness, it is impossible for him to tell us that the religion is complete, when the religion was not complete. And for the same reasons, it is impossible for him ﷺ to tell us that he was commanded to deliver what was revealed to him, when he did not in fact deliver what was revealed to him.

Thus, the Prophet ﷺ completely delivered what Allah ﷺ commanded him to deliver.

## **ACUITY**

The prophets of God are necessarily sharp minded. This is because they are expected to argue with their opponents to expose the falsehood that those detractors are upon. This task cannot be accomplished by simpletons.

Furthermore, their acuity is given their rank above all mankind, and given that their followers are expected to imitate them. Entailing: that the prophets are the most noble of all humanity. And stupidity does not befit the one who occupies such a rank.

## **WHAT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR PROPHETS**

The negation of the above four is impossible for prophets. Since virtuousness, truthfulness, complete delivery of the message, and acuity, are all necessary for them. And the negation of necessities is impossible.

## **WHAT IS POSSIBLE FOR PROPHETS**

Possible for them is anything that is possible for humans, if it does not conflicts with their noble rank. Anything other than sins, detestable actions, foolishness, or falling into repelling illnesses (illnesses that discourage others to seek them for knowledge) like leprosy. Things like eating, sleeping, or marrying women.

# REVELATION

وَيَلْزُمُ الإِيمَانُ بِالْحِسَابِ ... وَالْحَشْرِ وَالْعِقَابِ وَالثَّوَابِ

[55] Entailing from this, is belief in the final judgment  
The gathering, the punishment, the reward

وَالنَّشْرِ وَالصَّرَاطِ وَالْمِيزَانِ ... وَالْخَوْضِ وَالنِّيرَانِ وَالجِنَانِ

[56] The resurrection, the Sirat, and the Mizan,  
The Hawd, the fires, the gardens

وَالجِنْ وَالْأَمْلَاكِ ثُمَّ الْأَنْبِيَا ... وَالْحُورِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ ثُمَّ الْأَوْلِيَا

[57] The Jinn, the Angels, the prophets,  
The Hoor, the Wildan, and then the Awliya'

وَكُلُّ مَا جَاءَ عَنِ الْبَشِيرِ ... مِنْ كُلِّ حُكْمٍ صَارَ كَالْفَرْدُوريِّ

[58] And everything that the Prophet has come with,  
Is true without question.

## THE PROPHET HAS COME WITH TRUTH

Now that the existence and Oneness of Allah ﷺ was established, and the Prophethood and truthfulness of Muhammed ﷺ was established, it becomes incumbent upon the Mukalaf to affirm everything that can be reliably traced back to Prophet Muhammed ﷺ. This is called revelation. Amongst what the Mukalaf must affirm is:

## THE RESURRECTION AND THE GATHERING

All of mankind will be resurrected on the day of reckoning (al-Taghabun 7):

رَعَمَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ لَنْ يُبَعْثُوا قُلْ بَلَى وَرَبِّي لَتَبْعَثُنَّ ثُمَّ لَتُشَبَّهُنَّ بِمَا عَمِلْتُمْ وَذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرُ

The disbelievers think that they will not be resurrected. Say to them: verily by my Lord, you

will be resurrected, and you will be informed of what you have done. And all of this is easy for Allah to do.

And they will be gathered by their Lord to be judged by Him (al-Mujadila 9):

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

And fear Allah, to Whom you will be gathered.

## THE FINAL JUDGEMENT

Allah ﷺ will hold the Mukalaf to account for what he has done in his worldly life. He ﷺ will speak to the Mukalaf by either allowing him to become aware of the meanings He ﷺ signified with His eternal Self Speech, or by creating sounds expressing those meanings for the Mukalaf.

The ease or difficulty of the judgement, will depend on the deeds or sins of the one being judged (al-Inshiqaq 7-15):

فَمَمَّا مِنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيمِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا وَمَمَّا مِنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ وَرَاءَ ظَهْرِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُو شُبُورًا وَيَضْلَى سَعِيرًا إِنَّهُ كَانَ فِي أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا إِنَّهُ ظَنَّ أَنَّ لَنْ يَحُورَ بَلِّي إِنَّ رَبَّهُ كَانَ بِهِ بَصِيرًا

As for the one who will be presented his record in his right hand, he will receive an easy judgement, and he will return to his family joyfully. But as for the one who will receive his record behind his back, he will cry for destruction, and will be roasted in the Fire, surely he used to live joyfully amongst his family. Surely he thought that he would never return to his Lord. But verily, his Lord was ever watchful of him.

And Allah ﷺ is free to either hold the slave to account for every sin, or forgive any (or even all) of those sins. The Prophet ﷺ told us of the mercy Allah ﷺ will show to the righteous believer (Bukhari 4685):

يُدْنِي الْمُؤْمِنُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ حَتَّى يَضَعَ عَلَيْهِ كَنَفَهُ فَيَقْرِرُهُ بِذُنُوبِهِ، تَعْرِفُ ذَنْبَ كَذَا؟ يَقُولُ: أَعْرِفُ، يَقُولُ: رَبِّ أَعْرِفُ مَرَّتَيْنِ، فَيَقُولُ:

سَتَرْتُهَا فِي الدُّنْيَا، وَأَغْفِرُهَا لَكَ الْيَوْمَ

The believer will step forward for judgment, and Allah ﷺ will screen him from others before recounting for him his sins. Allah will ask him: do you remember such and such a sin that you committed? The believer will respond: "I remember it my Lord, I remember it my Lord." So Allah will tell him: I concealed this sin from others during your worldly life, and I will forgive it for you today.

A few believers, including all the prophets, will be allowed into paradise without judgment.

## THE SIRAT, MIZAN, AND HAWD

And amongst that which has been reliably reported from the Prophet ﷺ, is the passing over the Sirat, the weighing of deeds with the Mizan, and the drinking from the Hawd. And the occurrence of all of this is rationally possible, so there is no reason to not interpret the texts relating this literally.

The Sirat is a bridge over Hellfire that the believers will cross in order to reach Paradise. How easy it is for each believer to cross the Sirat, depends on their deeds in this life. The Prophet ﷺ said (Muslim 182):

وَيُضْرِبُ الصِّرَاطُ بَيْنَ ظَهَرِيْ جَهَنَّمَ، فَأَكُونُ أَوَّلَ مَنْ يُجِيزُ، وَلَا يَتَكَلَّمُ يَوْمَئِذٍ إِلَّا الرُّسُلُ، وَدَعْوَى الرُّسُلِ يَوْمَئِذٍ: اللَّهُمَّ سَلَّمْ، سَلَّمْ

The Sirat will be extended over Hell, and me and my people will be the first to cross it. And none crossing it will be speaking at that time except for the prophets, who will be saying: “O Allah, grant us safe passage! Grant us safe passage!”

The Mizan is a scale that will weigh deeds and sins during judgment. According to one opinion, what is weighed are the records which the deeds and sins are written on (al-Anbiya' 47):

وَنَضَعُ الْمُوازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا

And We will lay down the scales of justice for the day of resurrection, so no soul will be treated unjustly.

The Hawd is a pool that Allah ﷺ gifted to the Prophet ﷺ. The believers will be allowed to drink from it, and they will not thirst thereafter ever again. The Prophet ﷺ said (Muslim 2292):

حَوْضِي مَسِيرَةُ شَهْرٍ، مَاؤُهُ أَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْلَّبَنِ، وَرِيحُهُ أَطْيَبُ مِنَ الْمِسْكِ، وَكَيْزَانُهُ كَنْجُومُ السَّمَاءِ، مَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهَا فَلَا يَظْمَأُ أَبَدًا  
My Hawd is so wide, it takes a month's journey to cross. Its water is whiter than milk, and its smell surpasses the smell of musk. Its cups [those that will be used by the believers to drink from it] are as numerous as the stars in the night sky. Whomsoever drinks from it, will never thirst again.

## REWARD AND PUNISHMENT

The believers will forever reside in Paradise (al-Nisa' 122):

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ حَقًّا وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ قِيلًا

As for those who believe and do good works, We shall admit them into the Gardens, beneath which rivers flow. Therein, they will reside forevermore. Verily, Allah's promise is true, and who speaks more truly than Him?

Even if some of them will enter the Hellfire for sometime because of their sins, Allah ﷺ will eventually show them mercy, and grant them entry into Paradise. The Prophet ﷺ said (Bukhari 44):

يَخْرُجُ مِنَ النَّارِ مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَفِي قَلْبِهِ وَزْنٌ شَعِيرَةٌ مِنْ خَيْرٍ، وَيَخْرُجُ مِنَ النَّارِ مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَفِي قَلْبِهِ وَزْنٌ بُرْةٌ مِنْ خَيْرٍ، وَيَخْرُجُ مِنَ النَّارِ مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَفِي قَلْبِهِ وَزْنٌ ذَرَّةٌ مِنْ خَيْرٍ

Allah will take out of the fire, anyone who says "there is no god except for Allah" while his heart contained goodness equal to the weight of barley. He will take out of the fire, anyone who says "there is no god except for Allah" while his heart contained goodness equal to the weight of a single grain. And He will take out of the fire, anyone who says "there is no god except for Allah" while his heart contained goodness equal to the weight of an atom.

The description of that which Paradise contains must also be affirmed. Including the *Hoor al-'In*: maidens that Allah creates as a gift to the believers. And the *Wildan*: youngsters created to serve food and drink to the believers in Paradise (al-Waqi'ah 17-24):

يَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُخَلَّدُونَ بِأَكْوَابٍ وَأَبَارِيقٍ وَكَأْسٍ مِنْ مَعْيِنٍ لَا يُصَدِّعُونَ عَنْهَا وَلَا يُنْزِفُونَ وَفَاكِهَةٌ مَّا يَتَخَيَّرُونَ وَلَحْمٌ طَيْرٍ مَّا يَشْتَهُونَ وَحُورٌ عِينُ كَامِثَالِ اللُّؤْلُؤِ الْمُكْنُونِ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

They will be served with everlasting youths, with bowls, jugs, and a goblet of pure wine. Wine that will cause them neither headache nor intoxication. And they will be served with any fruit they choose. And the meat of any bird they desire. And maidens with beautiful eyes, the likeness of pristine pearls. All of this in recompense for what the believers did.

As for the disbelievers, they will reside in Hellfire forever (Ali 'Imran 116):

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

The wealth and progeny of those who disbelieved will not help them against Allah. They are the inhabitants of Hell, and they will abide in it forever.

## THE PROPHETS THE ANGELS AND THE JINN

The Mukalaf must believe in the existence of the **Angels**, and the existence of the **Jinn**. As well as each of the **prophets** mentioned in revelation.

Notice: one does not need a separate proof for the prophethood of each of the prophets mentioned in revelation. One only needs to realize that Muhammed ﷺ is a true prophet, and that this Quran is from Allah ﷺ. After then, whatever is mentioned in the Quran must be affirmed, including prophethood for those individuals.

## THE AWLIYA'

And belief in the *Awliya'* (plural of *Wali*): who are righteous believers, with deep knowledge of Allah, who are obedient to Him, and who avoid sinning.

Notice: although the Wali is not necessarily sinless (in the manner that prophets are), it is impossible for the Wali to persist in sin.

Additionally, belief that Allah ﷺ can support his Awliya' with extraordinary events called *Karamat* (plural of *Karamah*). And those differ from the miracles of prophets (*Mu'jizat*) because a Wali is not a claimant to prophethood, so the occurrence of a Karamah does not signify the Wali's prophethood. Karamat like the one mentioned concerning Maryam, mother of 'Isa (Ali 'Imran 37):

كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنِّي لَكِ هَذَا قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ

Whenever Zakariya entered the prayer chamber, he found with Maryam food. He asked: "O Maryam, from where did this come from?" She replied: "this is from Allah. Surely Allah provides to whomsoever He wills without measure."

# CONCLUSION

وينطوي في كلمة الإسلام ... ما قد مضى من سائر الأحكام

- [59] Within the Testimony of Islam  
Are all the beliefs proven above.

فأكثر من ذكرها بالأدب ... ترقى بهذا الذكر أعلى الرتب

- [60] So frequent the remembrance of the Testimony with decorum,  
You will ascend with your remembrance to the highest of ranks.

وغلب الخوف على الرجاء ... وسر ملوك بلا تنازع

- [61] Be more fearful than hopeful  
And begin your path towards your Lord without hesitation.

وجدد التوبة للأذار ... لا تيأسن من رحمة الغفار

- [62] And repent from all your sins,  
Without losing hope in the mercy of the Forgiving.

وكن على آليه شكورا ... وكن على باليه صبورا

- [63] And be grateful for what He blesses you with,  
And remain patient with what He tests you with.

فكُلُّ أمرٍ بالقضاء والقدر ... وكُلُّ مقدورٍ فما عنْهُ مفرٌ

- [64] For remember that everything occurs in accordance with His eternal Will and Power,  
And none of His creatures can escape them.

فگُنْ لَهُ مُسَلِّمًا كَيْ تَسْلِمَا ... واتبع سبيل الناسِكينَ الْعَلَمَا

- [65] So submit to Him to be in safety,  
And follow in the path of the people of knowledge.

وخلص القلب من الآغيار ... بالجد والقيام بالاسحار

- [66] And purify your heart from anything that distracts you from Him  
And with renewed devotion, rise to perform the voluntary prayers late at night.

والفِكْرِ والذِّكْرِ عَلَى الدَّوَامِ ... مُجَتَبًا لِسَائِرِ الْآثَامِ

[67] Think of Him and remember Him always,  
And avoid all misdeeds.

مُرَاقبًا لِلَّهِ فِي الْأَحْوَالِ ... لِتَرْتَقِي مَعَالَمَ الْكَمالِ

[68] Being watchful of Allah at all times,  
To rise to the levels of perfection.

وَقُلْ بِذُلْلٍ رَبِّ لَا تَقْطَعْنِي ... عَنْكَ بِقَاطِعٍ لَا تَحْرِمْنِي

[69] And humbly say: My Lord, do not sever me  
From You, and do not deny me

مِنْ سِرِّكَ الْأَبَهِي الْمُزِيلِ لِلْعَمَى ... وَاحْتُمْ بِخَيْرٍ يَا رَحِيمَ الرُّحْمَانِ

[70] Your secret that removes blindness.  
And end my life while I am righteous, O Merciful one.

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ عَلَى الْإِتْمَامِ ... وَأَفْضَلُ الصَّلَاةِ وَالسَّلَامِ

[71] And all praise is due to Allah for helping me complete this work,  
And may His peace and blessings be upon

عَلَى النَّبِيِّ الْهَاشِمِيِّ الْخَاتِمِ ... وَآلِهِ وَصَاحِبِهِ الْأَكَارِمِ

[72] The Hashemite Prophet, the seal of the prophets,  
And his Household, and his noble Companions.

## IMAN AND ISLAM

Faith (*Iman*) is the submissive acceptance that follows from the certain conviction in the truth of that which is necessarily known from the religion. As for “that which is necessarily known from the religion”, those are the beliefs that satisfy both of the following conditions:

1. They are based on what has been Mass Transmitted from the Prophet ﷺ.
2. They are common knowledge amongst the Muslim masses.

Beliefs like the Oneness of Allah ﷺ, the finality of prophethood with Muhammed ﷺ, and that the five daily prayers are obligatory.

Notice: having faith that the daily prayers are obligatory, differs from actually performing them. The one who does not perform the daily prayers, whilst having faith in their being obligatory, is not a disbeliever. Rather, he is a sinful Muslim.

Given the above, the one who lacks certain conviction in the truth of that which is necessarily known from the religion, or harbors contempt towards it, is not a *Mu'min* (a *Mu'min* is he who possesses faith).

New converts are exempted from some of the above, because they require time to learn all that which is necessarily known from the religion.

As for “Islam”, when used to refer to the quality which distinguishes the Muslims from the disbelievers, it and “Iman” are synonymous.

## THE SHAHADAH

The Testimony of Islam is: “*La Ilaha Ila Allah, Muhammadun Rasul Allah.*” Meaning: there is no god except for Allah, and Muhammed is His messenger. Audible utterance of the testimony serves to indicate to other Muslims, that the utterer is now a Muslim. This is important, because some of the laws of Islam distinguish between the believer and the disbeliever. Laws concerning subjects like marriage and burial. And so the people enforcing those laws, need to know who in the community is a Muslim, and who isn’t.

**Within the Testimony of Islam, are all the beliefs proven above.**

As for the first part of the Testimony: “there is no god except for Allah...” Meaning: Allah ﷺ is the only necessary being in existence. This entails:

1. That this necessary being be beginningless, everlasting, independent, unique, and one.
2. That everything else in existence, exists contingently. So everything else in existence, depends on the One. Which means that the He ﷺ is attributed with the attributes of perfection, by virtue of which He creates and manages the affairs of the world. So He ﷺ is attributed with Power, Will, Knowledge, Life, Hearing, Seeing, and Speech.

As for the second part of the Testimony: “...Muhammed is the messenger of Allah.” Meaning: Muhammed ﷺ is the one who Allah ﷺ sent to guide mankind. This entails his ﷺ truthfulness, virtuousness, complete delivery of the message of Islam, and acuity. It also

entails belief in everything that Muhammed ﷺ came with from Allah ﷺ, including belief in the final judgment, the reward for the believers, the punishment of the disbelievers, and all of the laws that Allah ﷺ revealed to His prophet.

## **BELIEF SHOULD LEAD TO ACTION**

**So frequent the remembrance of the Testimony, to ascend with your remembrance to the highest of ranks. And begin your path towards your Lord without hesitation.**

**Think of Him and remember Him always, and avoid all misdeeds. And if you do fall into sin, repent from them, and never lose hope in the mercy of the Forgiving.**

**Purify your heart from anything that distracts you from Him, and with renewed devotion, do not only stop at what is obligatory for you to perform, but also rise to perform the voluntary acts of worship to increase your rank.**

**Be grateful for what He blesses you with, and remain patient with what He tests you with. For remember that everything occurs in accordance with His eternal Will and Power, and none of His creatures can escape them. So humbly say: My Lord, do not sever me from You, and end my life while I am righteous, O Merciful one.**

**And all praise is due to Allah. May His peace and blessings be upon the Prophet, his Household, as well as his noble Companions.**

# AL-KHARIDA AL-BAHIA

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

- [1] In the name of Allah, the Overly Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

يَقُولُ رَاجِيٌّ رَحْمَةَ الْقَدِيرِ ... أَيْ أَحَمْدُ الْمَشْهُورَ بِالدَّارِدِيرِ

- [2] Sates the one who hopes to receive the mercy of the Powerful – Ahmad, who is known as al-Dardir.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْوَاحِدِ ... الْعَالَمُ الْفَرِيدُ الْغَنِيُّ الْمَاجِدُ

- [3] All Praise is due to Allah, the Exalted, the One, the Omniscient, the Single, the Independent, the Majestic.

وَأَفْضَلُ الصَّلَاةِ وَالتَّسْلِيمِ ... عَلَى النَّبِيِّ الْمُصْطَفَى الْكَرِيمِ

- [4] And may His peace and blessings be upon the chosen Prophet, the noble one.

وَاللَّهُ وَصَاحِبِهِ الْأَطْهَارِ ... لَا سِيَّمَا رَفِيقُهُ فِي الْغَارِ

- [5] And upon his Household, and pious Companions. Especially he who accompanied him in the cave.

وَهَذِهِ عَقِيَّدَةُ سَنِيَّةٍ ... سَمَّيْتُهَا الْخَرِيدَةَ الْبَهِيَّةَ

- [6] This is a treatise on creed, I have named it “al-Kharida al-Bahia”.

لَطِيفَةٌ صَغِيرَةٌ فِي الْحَجْمِ ... لِكِنَّهَا كَبِيرَةٌ فِي الْعِلْمِ

- [7] Even though it is short in length, It is filled with beneficial knowledge.

تَكْفِيكِ عِلْمًا إِنْ تُرِدُ أَنْ تَكْتَفِيْ ... لِإِنَّهَا بِزُبُدِ الْفَنِّ تَقِيْ

- [8] It will suffice you if you seek to be sufficed. For it covers all the fundamentals of this discipline.

وَاللَّهُ أَرْجُو فِي قَبْوِ الْعَمَلِ ... وَالنُّفْعُ مِنْهَا ثُمَّ غَفَرَ الرَّزَّلِ

- [9] And in Allah I hope for the acceptance of this work.  
For it to benefit others, and for Him to forgive my shortcomings because of it.

أَقْسَامُ حُكْمِ الْعَقْلِ لَا مَحَالَةٌ ... هِيَ الْوُجُوبُ ثُمَّ الْإِسْتِحَالَةُ

- [10] The categories of rational judgement are most certainly;  
Necessity, then impossibility.

ثُمَّ الْجَوَازُ ثَالِثُ الْأَقْسَامِ ... فَإِنَّهُمْ مُنْحَتَ لَذَّةَ الْأَفْهَامِ

- [11] Then possibility, which is the third of the categories.  
So understand, you have been granted the gift of understanding.

وَوَاجِبٌ شَرْعًا عَلَى الْمُكَلَّفِ ... مَعْرِفَةُ اللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ فَاعْرِفِ

- [12] And it is a religious obligation for the Mukalaf,  
To know Allah Most High, so know Him.

أَيُّ يَعْرِفُ الْوَاجِبَ وَالْمُحَالَةَ ... مَعْ جَائِزٍ فِي حَقِّهِ تَعَالَى

- [13] To know what is necessary and impossible,  
Alongside what is possible for Him Most High.

وَمِثْلُ ذَا فِي حَقِّ رُسُلِ اللَّهِ ... عَلَيْهِمْ تَحِيَّةُ الْإِلَهِ

- [14] And likewise concerning the messengers of Allah,  
May His blessings be upon them all.

فَالْوَاجِبُ الْعُقْلِيُّ مَا لَمْ يَقْبَلِ ... الْإِنْتِقَافُ فِي ذَاتِهِ فَابْتَهِلِ

- [15] What is rationally necessary is that which does not  
Accept negation in of itself, so call upon Him.

وَالْمُسْتَحِيلُ كُلُّ مَا لَمْ يَقْبَلِ ... فِي ذَاتِهِ التَّبُوتُ ضِدَّ الْأَوَّلِ

- [16] And what is rationally impossible is that which does not  
Accept affirmation, the negation of the first.

وَكُلَّ أَمْرٍ قَابِلٌ لِلإِنْتِفَا ... وَلِلثُبُوتِ جَائِزٌ بِلَا خَفَا

- [17] And anything that accepts both negation  
And affirmation, is possible without a doubt.

ثُمَّ أَعْلَمْ بِأَنَّ هَذَا الْعَالَمًا ... أَيْ مَا سِوَى اللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَالِمِ

- [18] Then know that this world –  
Meaning all that exists except for Allah the Exalted, the Knowing.

مِنْ غَيْرِ شَكٍ حَادِثٌ مُفْتَقِرٌ ... لَأَنَّهُ قَامَ بِهِ التَّغْيِيرُ

- [19] – is without a doubt emergent and contingent,  
Because changes occurred within it.

حُدُوثُهُ وَجُودُهُ بَعْدَ الْعَدَمِ ... وَضِدُّهُ هُوَ الْمُسَمَّى بِالْقِدْمِ

- [20] Its emergence is its existence after non-existence,  
Whose negation is called beginninglessness.

فَاعْلَمْ بِأَنَّ الْوَصْفَ بِالْوُجُودِ ... مِنْ وَاجِبَاتِ الْواحِدِ الْمَعْبُودِ

- [21] So know that being existent  
Is a rational necessity for only the One who is worshipped

إِذْ ظَاهِرٌ بِأَنَّ كُلَّ أَثَرٍ ... يَهْدِي إِلَى مُؤْثِرٍ فَاعْتَرِ

- [22] For clearly every effect  
Is proof for the existence of an effector, so consider this well.

وَذِي تُسَمَّى صِفَةً نَفْسِيَّةً ... ثُمَّ تَلِيهَا خَمْسَةُ سَلْبِيَّةٍ

- [23] And existence is called the attribute of being  
Followed by five privative attributes

وَهِيَ الْقِدْمُ بِالذَّاتِ فَاعْلَمْ وَالْبَقَا ... قِيامُهُ بِنَفْسِهِ نِلْتَ النُّقْيَ

- [24] They are: Beginninglessness and Everlastingness,  
Independence, may you be granted piety.

تَخَالُفٌ لِلْغَيْرِ وَحْدَانِيَّةٌ ... فِي الذَّاتِ أَوْ صِفَاتِهِ الْعُلَيَّةِ

[25] Uniqueness and Oneness,  
He is One in His being, in His exalted attributes,

وَالْفِعْلِ فَالْتَّأثِيرُ لَيْسَ إِلَّا ... لِلواحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ جَلَّ وَعَلَاد

[26] And in His actions. Since affecting is for none except  
the One, the Overcomer, exalted is He.

وَمَنْ يَقُلُّ بِالْطَّبَّعِ أَوْ بِالْعِلْمِ ... فَذَاكَ كُفُرٌ عِنْدَ أَهْلِ الْمِلَّةِ

[27] So proclaiming belief in Necessitating Natures or Causes,  
Is disbelief according to the people of this religion.

وَمَنْ يَقُلُّ بِالْقُوَّةِ الْمُؤَدِّعَةِ ... فَذَاكَ بِدْعَىٰ فَلَا تَلْتَقِتِ

[28] And he who proclaims belief in the Delegation of Creative power,  
Is an innovator, so pay no attention to him.

لَوْلَمْ يَكُنْ مُتَّصِفًا بِهَا لَزِمٌ ... حُدُوثُهُ وَهُوَ مُحَالٌ فَاسْتَقِمْ

[29] And if He were not attributed with them, then this would entail  
His emergence, which is impossible, so remain on the straight path.

لَأَنَّهُ يُفْضِيُّ إِلَى التَّسْلِسِ ... وَالدَّوْرِ وَهُوَ الْمُسْتَحِيلُ الْمُنْجَلِي

[30] For otherwise it would entail an infinite regress,  
Or circularity, both a clear impossibility.

فَهُوَ الْجَلِيلُ وَالْجَمِيلُ وَالْوَلِيُّ ... وَالظَّاهِرُ الْقُدُوسُ وَالرَّبُّ الْعَلِيُّ

[31] Indeed He is the Majestic, the Beautiful, the Protector,  
The Overwhelming, the Pure One, the Exalted Lord.

مُنَزَّهٌ عَنِ الْحُلُولِ وَالْجِهَةِ ... وَالاتِّصالِ الْإِنْفِصالِ وَالسَّفَهِ

[32] Free from subsistence or confinement to a direction,  
Or from being physically connected to or disconnected from another, in the same way He is  
free from foolishness.

ثُمَّ الْمَعْانِي سَبْعَةُ لِرَأْيِي ... أَيْ عِلْمُهُ الْحَيْطُ بِالأشْيَاءِ

[33] Then there are the seven attributes of meaning,  
His Knowledge, which encompasses all things.

حَيَاةُهُ وَقُدْرَةُ إِرَادَةٍ ... وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ كَائِنٌ أَرَادَهُ

[34] His Life, Power, and Will,  
Everything that exists, exists because He willed it to.

وَإِنْ يَكُنْ بِضِدِّهِ قَدْ أَمَرَ ... فَالْقَصْدُ غَيْرُ الْأَمْرِ فَاطْرَحِ الْمِرَا

[35] Even if He commanded its opposite,  
For His intending for a thing to occur, differs from His commanding it, so abandon dispute.

فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ أَرْبَعًا أَقْسَاماً ... فِي الْكَائِنَاتِ فَاحْفَظِ الْمَقَامًا

[36] Now you know of four categories  
Concerning creation, so know your place.

كَلَامُهُ وَالسَّمْعُ وَالإِبْصَارُ ... فَهُوَ إِلَهُ الْفَاعِلُ الْمُخْتَارُ

[37] And His Speech, Hearing, and Seeing,  
For He is the divine One, the volitional creator.

وَواِجْبُ تَعْلِيقُ ذِي الصِّفَاتِ ... حَتَّمًا دَوَامًا مَا عَدَ الْحَيَاةُ

[38] And it is necessary to affirm the relations of each of the attributes,  
Most certainly and always, except for Life.

فَالْعِلْمُ جَزْمًا وَالْكَلَامُ السَّامِيُّ ... تَعَلَّقًا بِسَائرِ الْأَقْسَامِ

[39] His Knowledge and His Speech assuredly,  
Relate to all categories of rational judgment.

وَقُدْرَةُ إِرَادَةٍ تَعَلَّقًا ... بِالْمُمْكِنَاتِ كُلُّهَا أَخَا التُّقَى

[40] As for His Power and Will, they relate  
To all rational possibilities, so be pious.

وَاجْزِمْ بِأَنَّ سَمْعَهُ وَالبَصَرَا ... تَعَلَّقَا بِكُلِّ مَوْجُودٍ يُرَى

[41] And be certain that His Hearing and Seeing,  
Relate to any existent that can be seen.

وَكُلُّهَا قَدِيمَةٌ بِالذَّاتِ ... لَأَنَّهَا لَيْسَتْ بِغَيْرِ الذَّاتِ

[42] And the Divine being is beginninglessly characterized with each  
Because they are not other than the being.

ثُمَّ الْكَلَامُ لَيْسَ بِالْحُرُوفِ ... وَلَيْسَ بِالتَّرتِيبِ كَالْمَلْوَفِ

[43] Furthermore, His Speech is not of letters  
And it is not sequential, as one may be accustomed to.

وَيَسْتَحِيلُ خِدْرٌ مَا تَقَدَّمَ ... مِنَ الصِّفَاتِ الشَّامِخَاتِ فَاعْلَمَا

[44] And know that it is impossible for  
The above Divine attributes to be negated from Him.

لَأَنَّهُ لَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ مَوْصُوفًا ... بِهَا لَكَانَ بِالسُّوَى مَعْرُوفًا

[45] For if He were not attributed with them,  
Then He would be like creation.

وَكُلُّ مَنْ قَامَ بِهِ سِواهَا ... فَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي الْفَقْرِ قَدْ تَنَاهَى

[46] Indeed, any being that is not attributed with them  
Cannot be anymore than a contingent creature.

وَالْوَاحِدُ الْمَعْبُودُ لَا يَفْتَقِرُ ... لِغَيْرِهِ جَلَّ الْغَنِيُّ الْمُقْتَدِرُ

[47] And the One who we worship is not contingent  
Upon anything. For He is the Independent, the Powerful.

وَجَائِزُ فِي حَقِّهِ الإِيجَادُ ... وَالْتَّرْكُ وَالإِشْقَاءُ وَالإِسْعَادُ

[48] And it is possible for Him to create any contingent,  
Or leave it non-existent, including the creating of tribulations and pleasures

وَمَنْ يَقُلْ فِعْلُ الصَّالِحِ وَجَبًا ... عَلَى إِلَهٍ قَدْ أَسَاءَ الْأَدْبَا

[49] And he who proclaims that it is obligatory for Him to do what's better for creation  
Has disrespected the Divine.

وَاجْزِمْ أخِي بِرُؤْيَةِ إِلَهٍ ... فِي جَنَّةِ الْخَلْدِ بِلا تَنَاهِي

[50] And have firm faith, O brother, in seeing God  
In the everlasting Paradise.

إِذِ الْوُقُوعُ جَائِزٌ بِالْعَقْلِ ... وَقَدْ أَتَى فِيهِ دَلِيلُ النَّقلِ

[51] Since Seeing Him is rationally possible,  
And revelation has informed us of its occurrence.

وَصِفْ جَمِيعَ الرُّسُلِ بِالْأَمَانَةِ ... وَالصَّدْقِ وَالْتَّبْلِغِ وَالْفَطَانَةِ

[52] And attribute to all the messengers virtuousness,  
As well as truthfulness, complete delivery of the message, and acuity.

وَيَسْتَحِيلُ خِدْدُهَا عَلَيْهِمْ ... وَجَائِزٌ كَالْأَكْلِ فِي حَقِّهِمْ

[53] The negations of those attributes is impossible for them,  
And possible for them are actions like eating.

إِرْسَالُهُمْ تَقْضُلُ وَرَحْمَةٌ ... لِلْعَالَمَيْنَ جَلَّ مُولَيِ النُّعْمَةِ

[54] His sending them is from His grace and mercy  
To all worlds, exalted is He.

وَيَلْزَمُ إِيمَانُ بِالْحِسَابِ ... وَالْحَشْرُ وَالْعَقَابُ وَالثَّوابُ

[55] Entailing from this, is belief in the final judgment  
The gathering, the punishment, the reward

وَالنَّشْرُ وَالصَّرَاطُ وَالْمِيزَانُ ... وَالْحَوْضُ وَالنَّيْرَانُ وَالْجَنَانُ

[56] The resurrection, the Sirat, and the Mizan,  
The Hawd, the fires, the gardens

والجِنُّ والأَمْلَكِ ثُمَّ الْأَئِبِيَا ... وَالْحُورُ وَالْوِلْدَانِ ثُمَّ الْأَوْلِيَا

- [57] The Jinn, the Angels, the prophets,  
The Hoor, the Wildan, and then the Awliya'

وَكُلُّ مَا جَاءَ عَنِ الْبَشِيرِ ... مِنْ كُلِّ حُكْمٍ صَارَ كَالْفَرُورِي

- [58] And everything that the Prophet has come with,  
Is true without question.

وَيَنْطَوِي فِي كِلْمَةِ إِلْسَامٍ ... مَا قَدْ مَضِيَ مِنْ سَائِرِ الْأَحْكَامِ

- [59] Within the Testimony of Islam  
Are all the beliefs proven above.

فَأَكْثَرُنَّ مِنْ نِكْرِهَا بِالْأَدَبِ ... تَرَقِي بِهَا الذِّكْرُ أَعْلَى الرُّتُبِ

- [60] So frequent the remembrance of the Testimony with decorum,  
You will ascend with your remembrance to the highest of ranks.

وَغَلِبُ الْخَوْفَ عَلَى الرَّجَاءِ ... وَسِرْ لِمَوْلَاكَ بِلَا تَنَاءٍ

- [61] Be more fearful than hopeful  
And begin your path towards your Lord without hesitation.

وَجَدِّدِ التَّوْبَةَ لِلأَوْزَارِ ... لَا تَيَأسَنْ مِنْ رَحْمَةِ الْغَفَّارِ

- [62] And repent from all your sins,  
Without losing hope in the mercy of the Forgiving.

وَكُنْ عَلَى آلَائِهِ شَكُورًا ... وَكُنْ عَلَى بَلَائِهِ صَبُورًا

- [63] And be grateful for what He blesses you with,  
And remain patient with what He tests you with.

فَكُلُّ أَمْرٍ بِالْقَضَاءِ وَالْقَدَرِ ... وَكُلُّ مَقْدُورٍ فَمَا عَنْهُ مَفْرُ

- [64] For remember that everything occurs in accordance with His eternal Will and Power,  
And none of His creatures can escape them.

فَكُنْ لَهُ مُسْلِمًا كَيْ تَسْلَمًا ... وَاتْبِعْ سَبِيلَ النَّاسِكِينَ الْعَلَمًا

[65] So submit to Him to be in safety,  
And follow in the path of the people of knowledge.

وَخَلِّصِ الْقَلْبَ مِنَ الْأَغْيَارِ ... بِالْجِدِّ وَالْقِيَامِ بِالْأَسْحَارِ

[66] And purify your heart from anything that distracts you from Him  
And with renewed devotion, rise to perform the voluntary prayers late at night.

وَالْفِكْرِ وَالذِّكْرِ عَلَى الدَّوَامِ ... مُجْتَنِبًا لِسَائِرِ الْآثَامِ

[67] Think of Him and remember Him always,  
And avoid all misdeeds.

مُرَاقبًا لِلَّهِ فِي الْأَحْوَالِ ... لِتَرْتَقِي مَعَالِمَ الْكَمالِ

[68] Being watchful of Allah at all times,  
To rise to the levels of perfection.

وَقُلْ بِذُلْلٍ رَبِّ لَا تَقْطَعْنِي ... عَنْكَ بِقَاطِعٍ وَلَا تَحْرِمْنِي

[69] And humbly say: My Lord, do not sever me  
From You, and do not deny me

مِنْ سِرِّكَ الْأَبَهِي الْمُزِيلِ لِلْعَمَى ... وَأَخْتُمْ بِخَيْرٍ يَا رَحِيمَ الرُّحْمَانِ

[70] Your secret that removes blindness.  
And end my life while I am righteous, O Merciful one.

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ عَلَى إِلَتْهَامِ ... وَأَفْضَلُ الصَّلَاةِ وَالسَّلَامِ

[71] And all praise is due to Allah for helping me complete this work,  
And may His peace and blessings be upon

عَلَى النَّبِيِّ الْهَاشِمِيِّ الْخَاتِمِ ... وَآلِهِ وَصَاحِبِهِ الْأَكَارِمِ

[72] The Hashemite Prophet, the seal of the prophets,  
And his family, and his noble Companions.